

The
BOOK *of* GENESIS
UNVEILED

By
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FIRST SERIES

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PUBLISHERS' ANNOUNCEMENT

In the series of volumes of which this forms the first, the author presents an explanation of the *Genesis* stories never before offered, save in vague hints and suggestions scattered throughout numerous ancient writings.

A study of comparative religion is essential for the perfect comprehension of the deeper meaning of the Bible stories, hence each story and interpretation will be preceded by a study of similar records found in the different Sacred Scriptures of the world ; hence also the necessity for the introductory volume here presented.

This first volume contains a general critical study, and shows the method used for the unveiling of the *Book of Genesis*, describes the Creation stories of all the great religions, whilst the stories of Chaldea and Ancient America will form the subjects of the second volume. The reader will need to consider this introductory matter with patience, for its assimilation is indispensable to a complete understanding of the explanation of the story of Creation, which will form the subject of the later volumes of this series.

The third volume will present a deep and carefully reasoned interpretation of the

Creation story of *Genesis*, together with many comparisons from the best authorities and the Sacred writings of the world; the different ideas of creation will be compared, and the real, but hitherto hidden, meaning of the Hebrew account will be given, in accordance with the method outlined in the present volume.

The Garden of Eden story will later be treated in the same manner, the fullest definition of the Characters depicted being attempted, and the true meaning of the Garden of Eden itself, from different points of view, unfolded.

Finally, the deep inner significance of the Story of the Flood will be expounded, after an exhaustive comparison with the many Flood stories of the world.

The whole task, more comprehensive and illuminating than it is here possible to indicate will, it is hoped, be completed in a series of ten volumes.

N.B.—*The author will welcome any information or constructive criticism regarding the matter of the present volume, or any enquiries relating to the first ten chapters of GENESIS. All replies or comments will be given and considered in the later volumes.*

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the wealth of criticism collected and offered in this work, it is not even remotely intended in a destructive sense, but has as its foundation a truly religious and constructive Ideal.

The work is not addressed to those who, full of faith in the fundamentals of religion, can afford to close their eyes to the obvious defects of editing and collating found in the Scriptures. Rather is it offered to the Gnostic and would-be Gnostic, to the religious and philosophical students of a modern and critical age, and to all such as do not fear criticism if it be constructive, least of all if a deeper meaning be discovered in the Scriptures by means of such a criticism, as it is certainly intended shall be the case here.

Notwithstanding the process of re-arrangement through which the different writings have passed in the building up of the "Book," in spite of the fact that much of it was written long after the recorded statements, and apart from its many obvious and proved contradictions, its various authors and editors, the Bible yet remains, in many senses, the grandest and perhaps most wonderful Book the world has yet seen.

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Therefore, it is impossible that this work should be written in any spirit of antagonism. It aims at nothing save the helping forward of a new alignment of religious belief, the preparing of the way for a wider and deeper view of religion, based on Faith, Works, and above all, Understanding. It is this Understanding that alone can save, for true Faith is useless without it ; nor need it be feared, for the Intelligence which will unveil the deep inner meaning of the Sacred Writing will also demonstrate its essential Truth. As the Rev. J. B. Lightfoot, D.D., has well put it : " The abnegation of reason is not the evidence of faith but the confession of despair. *Reason and reverence are natural allies.*"¹

That Scripture needs in these days a far deeper interpretation than has hitherto been placed upon it, that the work of the constructive critic is necessary to the sweeping away of the mass of wrong-thinking engendered by the literalists around the *Genesis* stories, is admitted by many learned writers, clerical and orthodox.

Even Cory, the famous translator of the Greek *Fragments*, writing in pre-Victorian times, does not accept *Genesis* as a special or new " revelation."

¹ *St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (1866), p. xi.

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"It is manifest," he says, "that the circumstances of the Creation and the Fall were well known to all mankind previous to the dispersion. And the writings of Moses give to the chosen people not so much a new revelation as a corrected, authenticated and inspired account of circumstances which had then become partially obscured by time and abused by superstition . . . they must (both the ancient and Mosaic systems) have been ultimately derived from the common source of revelation."¹

Hermann Gunkel, the noted Evangelical professor of Old Testament Theology, although a sympathetic commentator, says :

"Many things are reported in *Genesis* which go directly against our better knowledge : we know that there are too many species of animals for all to have been assembled in any ark ; that Ararat is not the highest mountain on earth ; that ' the firmament of heaven ' . . . is not a reality, but an optical illusion ; that the stars cannot have come into existence after plants, as *Genesis* II., 10-14 reports ; that the rivers of the earth do not come from four principal streams . . . that the Tigris and the Euphrates have not a common source, and so on."²

Coming from such a source, this is indeed a confession. The Professor is, however, not perturbed by these discrepancies, and rightly concludes that :

"the evangelical churches would do well not to dispute the fact that *Genesis* contains legends—as has been done too frequently—but to recognize that the knowledge of this fact is the indispensable condition to an historical understanding of *Genesis*. This knowledge is too widely diffused among those trained in historical study ever again to be suppressed. It will surely spread among the masses of our people for the process is irresistible. Shall not we Evangelicals take care that it be presented to them in the right spirit."³

¹ *Fragments*, Cory., p. xli.

² *The Legends of Genesis*, trans. Carruth, p. 7.

³ *The Legends of Genesis*, pp. 11-12.

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This is, indeed, all the more necessary in that, as Prof. Taylor Lewis, LL.D., says :

"As there is no chapter in the Bible more important than the first of *Genesis*, so also may it be said that there is no one whose interpretation is more likely to be affected by the prejudgments, popular, scientific, or philosophical (or clerical), which the reader brings with him."¹

Says Dean Farrar :

"Scripture ought always to have been interpreted with direct primary reference to what must have been the original meaning and intention of those who wrote, and of those who received it. It *has* been for centuries interpreted with reference to dogmatic bias and traditional conceptions."²

Elsewhere he adds :

"A man may be a most useful preacher . . . without any pretence to learning which is essential to a profound and thorough knowledge of Scripture. And such men are sometimes misled into the supposition that they can speak with authority on the meaning and interpretation of particular passages. The supposition is entirely baseless. . . He who would aspire not only to found upon Scripture texts a moral and spiritual exhortation, but to ascertain and unfold the actual meaning of Scripture . . . must have at his command a multifarious knowledge. Without this he may be at home in the shallows which the child can ford, but not in the depths where the elephant must swim . . . The discovery of the true meaning . . . is only possible by an acquaintance with the original languages, and with the historic and other conditions under which the Scriptures were written. . . It is study alone which has in any degree rescued the Bible from masses of untenable exegesis, traditionally repeated in dull *catenae* and biassed commentaries."³

Says Professor Kuenen (Leyden) :

"Some narratives of the Pentateuch manifestly do not proceed from one and the same hand, but have been compiled out of

¹ In Clark's *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. I., p. 125.

² Intro. to *Pulpit Commentary*, vol. I., p. iii.

³ Intro. to *Genesis* in *The Pulpit Commentary*.

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different documents or records, which related probably to the same fact, but not exactly in the same manner. Such a difference between the documents, which the narrator had at his disposal, may certainly have been got rid of in the process of retouching."¹

This is possible, but as the Rev. C. C. Martindale admirably points out :

"Involved in any such study is the distinction between what an author says and the way in which he chooses to say it. An author may write history in the modern sense, or poetry, or moral truth. There is no *a priori* reason why a Scriptural author might not write inspired fiction. Whether he ever has is another matter. . . . The Church, then, has no difficulty whatever, in principle, in admitting that this element or that in a Biblical narrative, may be metaphorical. In fact she (the Roman Catholic Church) would declare heretical the man who should affirm that the phrase which says that God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, was anything else."²

Says Bishop Colenso :

"The Pentateuch as a whole was not written by Moses, and with respect to some, at least, of the chief portions, it cannot be regarded as historically true. It does not on that account cease to contain the true word of God."³

Bishop Cotterill, though considering the Pentateuch to be of Mosaic origin, says :

"Of course this does not imply either that Moses did not make use of more ancient documents, or that the book was not revised by Ezra or others who had authority."⁴

"The strongest evidence of the non-Israelite origin of the story of the Fall is furnished by the Biblical account itself, in the many mythological conceptions, of which traces still remain in *Genesis*."

¹ *The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Critically Examined*, p. 12.

² *Anthropology and the Fall*, p. 10.

³ *The Pentateuch Critically Examined*, p. 14.

⁴ *The Pulpit Commentary*, p. v.

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Thus writes Dr. John Skinner in his commentary on *Genesis*, and in confirmation quotes another Doctor of Divinity, the well-known Driver, who says :

"The narrative contains features which have unmistakeable counterparts in the religious traditions of other nations ; and some of these, though they have been accommodated to the spirit of Israel's religion, carry indications that they are not native to it."¹

Says Skinner :

"Among the features which are at variance with the standpoint of Hebrew religion we may put first of all the fact that the abode of Jahwe is placed, not in Canaan or at Mount Sinai, but in the far east. The strictly mythological background of the story emerges chiefly in the conceptions of the garden of the gods, the tree of life and knowledge, the serpent, Eve, and the Cherubim. It is true . . . that each of these conceptions is rooted in the most primitive ideas of Semitic religion ; but it is equally true that they have passed through a mythological development for which the religion of Israel gave no opportunity. Thus the association of trees and serpents in Semitic folk-lore is illustrated by an Arabian story, which tells how, when an untrodden thicket was burned down, the spirits of the trees made their escape in the form of white serpents ; but it is quite clear that a long interval separates that primitive superstition from the ideas that invest the serpent and the tree (in the Bible story). If proof were needed, it would be found in the suggestive combination of the serpent and the tree in Babylonian and Phœnician art ; or in the fabled gardens of the Hesperides, with its golden fruit guarded by a dragon, always figured in artistic representations as a huge snake coiled round the trunk of a tree. . . ."²

There has certainly been an endeavour throughout the ages to "improve" the story ; the editors have not only materialised every

¹ *Commentary to Genesis*, p. 51.

² *Ibid.*

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detail, but have anthropomorphised the story also. Thus they have seen Eve as a person, the first woman, the mother of earth's teeming millions, and this first error committed, the next step, the making real of the curse from their eastern point of view, was easy, woman being considered only as a possession of man.

As Skinner puts it :

"The doom of the woman consisted in the hardships incidental to her sex and social position in the East. The pains of child-birth and the desire which made her the willing slave of man, impressed the ancient mind as at once mysterious and unnatural, therefore to be accounted for by a curse imposed on woman from the beginning."

The idea of a special and divine inspiration on which the story is supposed to be based, is not, however, upheld by such criticisms. Skinner himself certainly says little concerning inspiration ; in fact, his commentary, though orthodox, contains much which shows that he does not accept the Garden of Eden story as literal history.

The belief that *Genesis*, as it is now, was not actually written by Moses, but edited and written up by Ezra from earlier documents, is by no means new. The Essenes, the students of the inner side of Judaism, considered that the original revelation was falsified by later interpolations, and this idea was held also

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by the later Gnostic sects and the esoteric Hebrews.

In the middle ages, the Jewish authorities were themselves uncertain of the origin of the Pentateuch, the so-called "Five Books of Moses." Many writers, such as Rabbi Moses, Isaac, Ben Jasos, and Aben Ezra, commenced a "genuine criticism," but all this did not seem to have much effect on ancient and accepted ideas.

In the 16th century, Carlstadt issued his *De Canonicis Scripturis, Moses non puisse scriptorem quinque librorum*. Andreas Mascius suggested, as is believed by the present writer, that "the Pentateuch in its *present* form is the work of Ezra, or another inspired man."

In the 17th century, Hobbs, in his *Leviathan*, stated that "the Pentateuch is a work *about* Moses, not *by* Moses, yet based on originals by the hand of Moses," and this view was accepted by the learned Jesuit, Isaac Peyrerijs. Spinoza definitely affirmed in his *Tractatus* that "Ezra is the author of the Pentateuch and of the remaining historical books in their present form." Father Simon, in his *Critical History of the Old Testament*, says: "Moses wrote the Laws; the history of his time he had written by annalists, from which followed the later composition of the

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Pentateuch." Clericus, another writer of the period, went much farther in his *Sentimens*; while Von Dale stated that "the Pentateuch was written by Ezra on the basis of the Mosaic Book of the Laws, and *other historical documents*."

The 18th century brought a return to the idea of the absolute genuineness of the writings, but this was soon followed by a reaction. Professor Hasse, of Königsberg University, stated that at the time of the exile the Pentateuch was composed from old records. Many other writers followed in the same strain, and the arguments for and against authenticity went steadily on, and are continued to this day.¹

The at-one-time very heated controversy between the geologists and literalists might have proved interminable had not the clergy themselves, endeavouring to protect the Bible from what they considered profanation, taken the side of the geologists and acknowledged that in some cases the "days" of creation were geological periods. The deeper students, however, soon realised that there was no connection between the mystical *Genesis* story and geological discoveries pertaining only to the physical plane; others, on the other hand, decided that it was better to evade

¹ See Clark's *Commentary*, vol. I (1871).

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the issue by showing that it was, in fact, not an issue at all. An illustration of this is given by Dean Farrar in his Introduction to *The Pulpit Commentary* :

" We no sooner open the *Book of Genesis* than we are met by whole volumes of controversy as to the relation between science and religion, and the supposed contradictions between the results of the one and the declarations of the other. Do such controversies lie within the ordinary sphere of homiletics? We should say decidedly not, and that for many reasons. In the first place, few are competent really to deal with the question, and nothing is more irritating to men of science than to see obvious ignorance assuming the airs of infallibility, and demonstrating the impiety of proved conclusions, the very elements of which it does not understand. The clergy in so many thousands of instances, in age after age, have so conclusively proved their entire incompetence to decide upon points of science, and have been so repeatedly forced to modify their interpretations of Scripture in accordance with finally demonstrated and universally accepted truths."¹

In spite of his declaration that the *results* of science " have not in a single instance clashed with any truth of religion "—a very doubtful statement, to say the least—the Dean gives valuable advice which, if followed by the clergy and the laity, would certainly soon bring Science and Religion together.

In this very orthodox *Pulpit Commentary* (*Genesis*), edited by the Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Gloucester, it is said :

" that this initial section is not *history* is apparent from the circumstance that the occurrences it describes belong to a period of time which antedates the dawn of history. That it is not *science* is evinced by the fact that in some, at least,

¹ *The Pulpit Commentary*, by the Rev. Canon F. W. Farrar, p. x.

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of its particulars, it refers to a condition of our globe concerning which even modern science has attained to no definite conclusion, while in all of them it claims to be regarded not as uttering the findings of reason, but as declaring the course of nature."

Yet, after this striking utterance, the writer contends that :

"still less can it be called *myth* must be obvious to any who will carefully contrast it with those heathen cosmogonies which it is said to resemble The absurdities, puerilities, and monstrosities that abound in them are conspicuously absent from it."

The *Pulpit Commentary* further states that *Genesis* is :

"the inspired original of *which heathen creation stories are the corrupted traditions*, it may be ; impartial reason and honest criticism alike forbid its relegation to a common category with them. Since, then, it is neither history, nor science, nor mythology, it must be REVELATION."

Unfortunately for us, the reverend writer *does not say what it is supposed to reveal*, if it is neither history, science, nor myth. Moreover, it is a curious "revelation" of which a Dean of Westminster should declare that its language is "childlike, parabolical, and unscientific."

In addition to this decidedly belittling utterance, it is noteworthy that the Dean considers it futile to endeavour to make the facts of Geology fit the *Genesis* stories. He says :

"The early Biblical records were not and could not be literal and prosaic matter-of-fact descriptions of the world, of which no man knoweth nor can conceive, except by figure and parable."¹

¹ *Sermons on Special Occasions*, by Dean Stanley.

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St. Chad Boscawen, the gifted author and British Museum Lecturer, confirms, with many others, the belief that the Bible stories were not original. He was a deep student of Assyriology, and the charm of its study, he says, in his dedication to *The First of Empires*, had been "the one object" of his life. He points out that when the great Assyrian discoveries were made, little critical faculty was used in the work of comparison :

"The Biblical element was always predominant, and the referendum of all outside material. The Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch was enunciated as a proved fact, and therefore all the Assyrian and Babylonian material was merely of a confirmatory nature—*no suggestion that it was rather of the nature of (an) original could be entertained.* The rise of Higher Criticism on the Continent and in this country has, however, effected a strange change, and one which has also had a corresponding development in Assyriology. *Just as it is now clearly demonstrated that the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch is no longer tenable, so also is it shown that the literature of Babylonia, of which that of Assyria was but a later edition, has an antiquity exceeding, by more than a thousand years, that of the Mosaic age.* The immense number of religious and poetical inscriptions obtained from the buried libraries of Chaldea, enable us to trace the growth and development of the literature of those ancient peoples in a manner not to be met with in any other ancient nation.

"The labours of Wellhausen and Haupt on the Continent, and Cheyne and Driver in this country, and especially those of the late Professor Robertson Smith, have shown that, like all other Oriental literature, that of the Hebrew people was capable of being analysed and shown to be, not a series of concrete works, each to be assigned to a definite epoch, but that in most cases the works had undergone several editings, and that the Pentateuch and many of the other books of the Old Testament were a mosaic of fragments of varying authorship and date."¹

¹ *The First of Nations*, pp. x.-xi.

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Boscawen then enumerates the many proofs of this, and points out that the reduplication of the stories in *Genesis* is also evident in the Babylonian myths. This is perfectly true, as all Assyriologists are well aware. He concludes that the Babylonian stories are not only older than the Hebrew, but are themselves repetitions of more ancient Sumerian traditions, as the discoveries since made by the Pennsylvania University have amply demonstrated.

Says the Rev. T. K. Cheyne, D.L., D.D.:

"At the point which we have now, as a body of workers, reached, an enlargement of our methods is enforced upon us. It is our slowness to act upon this which is almost the chief hindrance to our progress in biblical study. Old methods, where sound, must not indeed be renounced, but new methods must be applied, and that on an extensive scale (to avoid hasty conclusions), for it must be confessed that even critics whom one could not justly call unmethodical, have often gone astray through relying too much on a single method, and deciding questions before the whole body of facts lay spread out before them."¹

After all these sincere statements, it is obvious that a new interpretation is necessary, though the *Book of Genesis* in its essence remains, and will remain, a monumental, age-defying work. It is neither to be cast aside, repudiated, nor ignored. All the criticism of the ages has been powerless to destroy it, nor will any future criticism be powerful enough to wipe out its world-

¹ Art. *Paradise*, *Ency. Biblica*.

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influence or its innate Wisdom as a Book of Ritual-Myth.

Its crudities are many and its faults not a few, but its timeless wisdom shines through the darkness of the literal and superficial translations, and will not deny itself to those students who come prepared to search and to find, whatever it may cost them of sacrifice and endeavour.

They who seek to make it fit into modern scientific conceptions or geological discoveries and the theories arising therefrom, will fail, as others have failed, for the Old Testament stories are, in many cases, myths containing truths relating mainly to creative periods of which the science of Geology has, as yet, no knowledge. Yet in the study of it there is room alike for the Scientist, the Geologist, and the Bible Student; each should bring his quota of wisdom and illumination, each should have respect for the other, and though the method of each must of necessity be different, their united discoveries may yet be found to be complementary.

BISHOP COLENSO ON THE PENTATEUCH

The first awakening of the national Church to the newer ideas took place as far back as 1860, when the discoveries of the geologists

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began to shake the faith of the more discerning amongst the clergy, and gradually forced them to a more rational interpretation of the Pentateuch.

Following this came the challenge of Colenso, the famous and intrepid Bishop of Natal, who with great daring boldly declared, in his *The Pentateuch Critically Examined*, that the Pentateuch was not an actual historical record, and that "as a true man" he could no longer close his eyes "to the absolute palpable self-contradictions of the narrative."

This bombshell—and in those days of narrow orthodoxy it could be no less—was, needless to say, not without its effect both upon the clergy and upon the position of the Bishop himself. He certainly was a very brave man, considering the times in which he lived; and it is not surprising that after the first two volumes of his book had been published, a fierce attack was made upon him, two Archbishops, to his own great astonishment, swelling the almost universal cry of "Heresy! Blasphemy!"

His episcopal brethren and the then Archbishop of Canterbury endeavoured to force him to resign his see and office, and a Committee was appointed to examine the two incriminating volumes. The prime mover in the matter, Archbishop Denison, who was

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finally elected Chairman of the Committee, may have failed in discernment and a sense of balance, but most certainly did not fail in zeal! Expressing the pious hope that there were many present (on the Committee) *who had not read the first part of the work*, and the belief that few would read the second,¹ he exclaimed: "If any man assert such things as are asserted in this book, *Anathema esto!* Let him be put away!"

In spite of all this, however, Colenso calmly persevered with and completed his work.

"Must we," he said, "live on, as men did in former ages, under strict ecclesiastical restraints as if there was a 'dark chamber' in the house into which we have once looked but have shut to the door and dare not look again lest we should see something to frighten us out of our 'hopes of eternity' and cause us the loss of 'all our nearest and dearest consolations'? How much better to open wide the door and let in the blessed light and air of day into every part of our spiritual dwelling! That light, indeed, may show us that the stories of the 6 days' Creation, the Noachian Deluge and the slaughter of 68,000 Midianitish women and children, are no longer to be spoken of as historical facts. . . . What a day of regenerated life will it be for the Church of England when these things shall be spoken of plainly and freely in every pulpit of the land—when the Bible shall be opened and the story of its origin explained and the real value of its histories discussed, as the records of living men, like ourselves, written down by living men—with the reverence due to a Book so venerable and endeared to the heart of every Christian . . . we can only thus serve God acceptably and discharge our duty before Him as Christian men and Ministers by such free enquiry and such free utterance of it."²

Amongst many enemies, however, Colenso had fortunately one good friend, and how

¹ *The Pentateuch Critically Examined*, vol. III. p. xxxi.

² *Ibid.*

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precious to the harassed Bishop must have been the help and encouragement he received during these dark days ! This good man, the Rev. W. Houghton, of Wellington, Salop, a writer on zoological subjects and a contributor to a well-known dictionary of Natural History, had the courage to express his own convictions in no uncertain voice, both privately and publicly. In a letter to the Bishop, he says :

“ You have been judged a heretic for promulgating a doctrine expressly taught by our Lord Himself and by the Evangelist, St. Luke.”

After quoting many Church writers whose views confirmed Colenso's, he continues :

“ The more I examine the whole question for myself, the more certain I become that in the Bible legend is mixed with history, poetic imaginings with prosaic narrative, that no miraculous power has been exerted to preserve it from omissions, interpolations and corruptions of the text. . . . the Bible is, therefore, not infallible in the sense in which the popular creed assumes it to be. . . . Notwithstanding a large admixture of the human and therefore fallible element in the Bible . . . in the Book there is a *jewel* of heavenly lustre and priceless value. Why are we to suppose that the *jewel* shines less brilliantly or loses one iota of its value because the gold of its *setting* has a considerable percentage of alloy ? Why will men refuse to drink of the ‘ water of life ’ because it is offered to them in an earthen vessel ? ”¹

Fortunately the *anathemas* of the Committee were not echoed by the higher tribunal, and Colenso was finally freed by the Privy Council. But as he himself was free from what he termed “ the intolerable yoke of

¹ *The Pentateuch Critically Examined*, vol. III., p. xl.

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absolute Church authority," so also he desired that all his brethren in Holy Orders should be free "to speak their honest convictions on these points and instruct their people in such knowledge as they had gained."¹

"For our ordination vows as Ministers," he says, "not only do not forbid, but positively bind us in the most solemn way . . . to make such enquiries and to declare the results of them, if we think it needful or desirable to do so. Every Presbyterian of the National Church is solemnly pledged at his ordination 'to be diligent in reading of the holy scriptures and of such studies as help to the knowledge of the same,'—of such critical study, therefore, as contributes to the more thorough understanding of the Pentateuch as well as the New Testament. Further, he is then solemnly pledged to teach nothing as necessary to salvation but what he 'shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by same.' He is not, therefore, to teach that 'all our hopes for eternity depend upon belief in the historical truth of Noah's Flood or the story of the Exodus, or in the trustworthiness of every line in the Bible, if in his own mind and conscience he is not persuaded that the Scriptures, when carefully examined, suffice to 'conclude and prove' the truth of such statements."²

It was the chief theme of his work, the challenge as to the actual historicity of the Pentateuch, which made his book so remarkable. He repeatedly points out that "the unhistorical character of the so-called Mosaic narrative seems to be forced upon us," and emphatically declares his conviction that :

'The Pentateuch, as a whole, was not written by Moses, and that, with respect to some, at least, of the chief portions of the story, it cannot be regarded as historically true. *It does not on that account cease to contain the true word of God, to enjoin things necessary for salvation, to be profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness.* It still

¹ *Ibid.* vol. V., p. xlii.

² *Ibid.* vol. IV., p. xxxi.

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remains an integral portion of that Book . . . with whatever admixture it may show of human error, infirmity, passion and ignorance . . . and has been the means of revealing to us His True Name. . . . We must be content to take the Bible as it is and draw from it those Lessons which it really contains."¹

One important matter Colenso did not overlook, as the above clearly shows, and as he elsewhere makes clear :

" Our belief in God remains as sure as ever though not the Pentateuch but the whole Bible were removed. . . . There will be others . . . —meek, lowly, loving souls, who are walking daily with God, and have been taught to consider a belief in the historical veracity of the story of the Exodus an essential part of their religion ; upon which, indeed, as it seems to them, the whole fabric of their faith and hope in God is based. It is not really so : the Light of God's Love did not shine less truly on pious minds when Enoch walked with God of old, though there was then no Bible in existence, than it does now. And it is, perhaps, God's will that we shall be taught in this our day . . . not to build up our faith upon a Book, though it be the Bible itself, but to realise more truly the blessedness of knowing that He Himself, the Living God, our Father and Friend, is closer to us than any book can be,²—that His Voice within the heart may be heard continually by the obedient child that listens for it, and that shall be our Teacher and Guide. . . . when all other helpers—even the words of the Book of Books—may fail us."³

This saintly insight into the real need of the human soul, can, surely, only have sprung from such a flame of mystical conviction as is spoken of by the late F. W. H. Myers, in his inexpressibly beautiful, *Saint Paul* :

" *Ay, and when Prophecy her tales hath finished,
Knowledge hath withered from the trembling tongue,
Love shall survive and Love be undiminished,
Love be imperishable, Love be young.*

¹ *The Pentateuch Critically Examined*, vol. I., p. 14.

² "Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet." *Tennyson The Higher Pantheism.*

³ *The Pentateuch Critically Examined*, vol. I., p. 12.

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*Oh could I tell ye surely would receive it !
Oh could I only say what I have seen !
How should I tell or how can ye receive it,
How, till he bringeth you where I have been ?*

*Scarcely I catch the words of his revealing,
Hardly I hear him, dimly understand,
Only the Power that is within me pealing
Lives on my lips and beckons to my hand.*

*Whoso hath felt the spirit of the Highest
Cannot confound nor doubt him nor deny :
Yea with one voice, O world, tho' thou deniest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I."*

This, undoubtedly, expresses the real inspiration which upheld Colenso during the dark period through which he passed, undismayed and unabashed. Even whilst insisting that the Bible stories were not always historical, he persistently looked forward to that time when in each man's heart the Voice of God would make itself heard, and man should rest not on a book, however holy, but on the ONE Himself, and surely this is the only at-one-ment.

"How different it would be," he exclaims, "if all the more enlightened of the clergy were to take at once the stand, which in the end must surely be taken—were to take boldly God's facts, as they are, and bring them forth, in their habitual teaching, so making them, by degrees, familiar to the people. When such teaching as this is confirmed by the speaking earnestness of a pure and holy life, and enforced by a course of loving and devoted labour for the good of men, there need be no fear of men making shipwreck of their trust in God or finding suddenly their hopes for eternity failing, all their 'nearest and dearest consolations' taken from them. Without any dangerous shock to their faith, a superstitious reverence for the Bible would then give way to a right and

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intellectual appreciation of the true value of the Scriptures as containing God's word, a blessed and glorious revelation of Eternal Truth to man."¹

The day of exhortation is ending, as Colenso saw, and as we well know, and in the East already glimmers the dawn of a new day wherein explanation shall give place to understanding, wherein perhaps One, greater than Colenso, greater than the world has seen these two thousand years, may appear amongst men to make known to them the Reality that IS.

The whole purpose of this work is to elucidate the meaning hidden in the first ten chapters of Genesis, but there will be no attempt to destroy religion, which of course, would be doomed to failure, but simply to clarify as far as possible the *conceptions* of religion. Truth *must* remain and needs no defence, but truth is often veiled, and therefore an attempt to lift the veil must be made.

Though no attempt, then, will be made to attack religion itself, but rather the opposite, there may be some readers who have accepted the conventional commentaries of Genesis and who regard the Bible stories as simple literal history, "all true and nothing wanting," to whom this work will come not as a revelation, but as a shock.

Of such it must be said that Truth itself is

¹ *The Pentateuch Critically Examined*, vol. IV., p. xl.

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indestructible, though *human conceptions* enforced and imposed by assertion and "authority" must be continually changing if progress is a fact in nature. Indeed, certain *views, opinions* and *conceptions* of Truth will surely be found wanting as the race progresses. If such views are destroyed no great harm will result.

The writer, therefore, offers the whole of this work with the hope that it will aid religionists to think for themselves. If this be accomplished, it will not matter if the present work be rejected.

CHAPTER ONE

THE INNER SIDE OF THE PENTATEUCH

The Pentateuch is a collection of writings around which, throughout the ages, much controversy has raged, each disputant seeing it in the light of his own more or less limited, and usually sectarian, knowledge, each sect claiming its infallibility, yet reading into it just whatever suited the requirement and the occasion, thus giving rise to the saying that "the Devil quotes scripture for his own purpose."

The original tongues in which these scriptures were written are often unknown to religionists and agnostics alike, hence the endless controversy and argument over what, after all, are literal and sometimes incorrect translations, as could easily be demonstrated.

It is, unfortunately, the fashion with many to belittle and condemn all those things which are beyond the comprehension of the man in the street, with his partial intuition, his limited leisure and opportunity for study

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and thought ; many, too, there be, as in the days of Butler's *Hudibras* :

“ Who will not credit their own souls,
Nor any science understand
Beyond the reach of eye and hand ;
But measuring all things by their own
Knowledge, judge nothing's to be known.”

It is this inability to grasp what lies beyond personal knowledge which gives rise to doubting statements regarding the Bible which are heard from every side, from Jew and Christian alike. Some would reject the whole ; others, afraid to lose their hold, compromise according to custom, accepting part, rejecting part, and turning upon the rest the light of the so-called “ higher criticism.” This higher criticism sometimes fails, because it often commences without a firm foundation, without adequate knowledge of the original scriptures, and therefore with a false premise. Moreover, the translation of *Genesis* as in the “ authorised ” version, is, as will be shown, not entirely to be relied upon, for *it is a literal translation of a symbolical original.*

Thus, ignorant of its inner teaching, lacking the key which may unlock the door of the treasure-house, many sink into a slough of despond, becoming agnostics or atheists for lack of knowing how to believe, for lack of a friendly torch to lighten the darkness. Such

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as these, when asked if they "believe in the Bible," answer with a decided negative; they become the sport of the *pseudo* rationalist, the despair of the deeper student. As has been said, they "throw away the baby with the dirty water from the bath."

Do we believe in the Bible? The purpose of these pages is to answer this question with an emphatic affirmative, an affirmative which will carry with it certain definite proofs, and which is the result of study under the guidance of a valued friend and teacher, Elias Gewurz (to whom there must ever be a lasting debt of gratitude), and also of the providential discovery of an old volume of *La Langue Hebraique Restituée*, a wonderful, inspirational work by Fabre D'Olivet.¹

This book, published in Paris in the year 1816, is a key to, and a commentary upon, the first ten chapters of *Genesis*, a commentary which itself requires another to unravel its mysteries, for though unveiling a mystery it yet contains many more in its pages.

It is necessary as an introduction to the present work to offer some idea of the interpretation placed upon these writings by the erudite and gifted author in question, adding

¹ Recently translated by Nayan Redfield as *The Restoration of the Hebrew Language*. (Putnams).

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to it much that it is believed he was not permitted to give expression to, or perhaps did not think it wise to publish to the world, evidently feeling that the times in which he wrote, during the first French Revolution, were not such as permitted him to explain the very deep meanings hidden in the *Book of Genesis*. It was, certainly, not then safe to make the attempt. He, however, did translate the first ten chapters, but his translation was so difficult to understand that it needed a further commentary upon every line, a commentary which would far have exceeded the limits of the work itself. D'Olivet himself evidently felt this, for he says that he does not profess to explain the mysteries of the *Book of Genesis*, being a mere translator ; he expresses the hope that others may come forward to finish the work he has begun.

His method of analysis is a qabalistic one, and consists in translating not only the root meanings of the words, but also the meaning deeply hidden in the letters themselves. From this point of view, the words and letters are symbols which hide the true interpretation from the superficial reader, and which, when translated literally, show forth the husk alone and leave the marvellous interior beauties unrevealed.

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It is not only the Hebrew letters which have picture and hieroglyphical significations, as H. P. Blavatsky notes in *The Secret Doctrine*¹ where she points out that the letter *I* “signified with the Alexandrian Initiates *a body erect, a living* standing man, he being the only animal that has this privilege, and by adding to the ‘*I*’ a head, it was transformed into a ‘*P*,’ a symbol of *paternity*, ‘a moving man,’ one on his way.”

Apart from this meaning of the letters, a fundamental key to the Scriptures, there are other methods used by which, in a simple literal historical version, a deeper meaning is hidden, so that those who know the method of hiding may easily understand the mystery. This must now be explained.

No nation is left without guidance, as can be ascertained by all who study the literature of the past. In the East as well as in the West, on the stones of Babylon and Egypt, in the stories of the ancient Mayas and Quichés, in the Runes of the Northmen, in Greek and Hebrew, in Sanskrit, Chinese and Japanese, in Tibetan and Assyrian, on ancient papyrii and palm-leaves, and the modern printed pages—in all the same story is found, in all the Divine Wisdom stands revealed. Throughout the civilised and uncivilised

¹ 3rd Edition, Vol. II., p. 607.

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world, the Ancient Wisdom was known, being given out by the wisest of the race as occasion and opportunity called it forth, modified only to suit time, place and circumstance, and therefore called by many and various names, but itself "one and the same forever."

As far back as can be traced in the earliest times of India, there was always a dual doctrine, the exoteric and the esoteric. The former gave rise to materialised beliefs, and whilst administering relief and consolation to those not ready to think independently, who required dogma because constitutionally unable to grasp what lay behind the dogma, it yet inevitably tended to bring about the degradation of religion. Just as to-day we have, on the one hand, the Salvation Army, expressing crudely the great truths of Christianity whilst doing much good and useful work, and, on the other hand, the higher forms of Christianity, from the lowest to the finest type of mysticism, so, in all ages when men and women were, as now, in different stages of development, there were always graded forms of religious teaching sufficient for the needs of mankind as a whole. Hence, in ancient India there was the exoteric form of religion which has produced many very argumentative sects, but there was also a deeper and more mystical WISDOM which

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was at the root and base of all the varied sectarian beliefs. This WISDOM was then, and is now, known under the title of GUPTA VIDYA, or BRAHMA VIDYA, the DIVINE WISDOM.

In later ages, in the region of Babylonia, the same DIVINE WISDOM again appeared under the name of MAG, the "great" or divine Wisdom, its followers being known as MAGI. Outwardly, it tended to sun and star worship, but the inner meaning of the teaching was known to the philosophers and mystics of that period. To the "children" amongst mankind, the WISDOM was explained by glyph and symbol, by fairy story or mythological tale. All the stories which the sectarian claims as the sole possession of the Hebrews and Christians, were then known, as the discoveries of modern times have proved to the satisfaction of even the orthodox. Indeed, the stories brought to light by the deciphering of the writing on ancient stones from Babylonia, have been published by no less a house than The Sunday School Times Company (Philadelphia) under the title of *Light on the Old Testament from Babylon*, and edited by Arthur Clay, professor of the University of Pennsylvania.¹

In later periods, the WISDOM is to be

¹ All this will be explained in a later chapter.

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traced in the mythologies of Egypt and of Greece, the deeper teaching being understood by the student and philosopher, whilst the many, the people, were content with the literal interpretation. This Wisdom gradually became incorporated in the later teachings of Christianity as the Greeks became christianised, the dogmas of Christianity becoming infused with the Greek myths and the two so finely blended that a new form of religion arose. Thus among the early Christians the WISDOM came to be known as the GNOSIS, literally, *the Wisdom*, again showing forth the esoteric or inner meaning of all literal myths.

To the Hebrews the same DIVINE WISDOM was taught, Jesus himself using its methods, for, of course, the Master was a JEW—a fact which should be remembered when the Jews are persecuted in His Name—and so it is not strange that this mystical or deeper teaching should be discovered in Christianity. It will be seen in this great religion, as in others, that there is an inner meaning as well as an outer presentation.

In the earliest days of Hebrew tradition, this Wisdom was named "secrets and mysteries," but later a new name was given and exists to this day, *viz.*, the term *Qabalah*, from the root, QBL, meaning literally *the*

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received doctrine, the inner teaching, oral rather than written.

The great outstanding work in which these "secrets and mysteries" were reduced to regular form was the inspired effort of the Rabbi Moses de Leon, the *Book of the Zohar*, in which he either collected together the different teachings of the famous Rabbi Shimeon ben Jochai and edited and arranged them as a complete work, or was impressed, or inspired, to give forth certain knowledge as if emanating from a company of ancient Hebrews. It is said by the French translator of the book, that the word *Qabalah* was first used by Rabbi Aaron Ashkenazi, but otherwise the doctrines, "the superstitions and mysteries," as the famous Jesuit Athanasius Kircher calls them, were known previously simply as "secrets and mysteries."

The Qabalists, the students and interpreters of Divine Wisdom, whether called Freemasonry, *Brahma Vidya*, Mystic Christianity, Sufism, or Gnosis, read the Scriptures in a peculiar manner. They had four ways of reading and interpreting that collection of symbols known as the Old Testament, each symbol having four (some say, more correctly, seven) meanings. The first of these, the literal, superficial manner, was called *Pshat* or simple ; this was the way for the ordinary

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folk. Next came *Ramaz*, literally *a hint*, for the student ; and *Darash*, meaning *inferential* or, perhaps, *intuitional*, for the disciple. For the Sage, there was a final method called, literally, *secret* or *Sud*. In this estimate, the Sage is thus the true Past Master, he who has attained to, and been purged thoroughly by, the fire of the Lion's Grip, who sees no sect as more important than another, sees each religion as useful and necessary according to the time and people to whom it was given. Such a man has obviously extracted from his experiences, whilst studying the sacred Scriptures, whether in books or in the hearts of men, that which is necessary for the development of perfection. He is the true Mystic who knows no real differences, and has attained thereby to Paradise whilst still on earth.

This may be symbolised qabalistically in the following manner : The governing letter of a word denotes its dominating idea ; thus as man learns to read the Scriptures of experience or Book of Life, in the simple, literal manner, he obtains that essence which, symbolically, is the letter "P," the ruler of the word *Pshat*. In the same way, he passes through the experiences constituting the other methods, *Ramaz*, *Darash*, and *Sud*, and extracts their essence, the initial letters

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of the words symbolising the process. Taking these governing letters, which, as we have seen, epitomise the dominating idea of each word, we get the word PRDS, *i.e.*, *Paradise*, written in Hebrew without points or "vowels." This simple play on letters holds a deep secret, one on which the student may well ponder.

These four ways of reading and interpretation, may also be expressed partly in the words of the *Book of Zohar* and partly in Masonic terms, as follows :

Pshat, the superficial method, may be compared to a beautiful robe in which a still more beautiful figure is enwrapped ; the superficial observer is lost in admiration of this outer covering and looks no deeper, forgetting the figure, which is itself not even the actual reality, but a mere physical structure, a containing vessel, or *a hint*, *Ramaz*, the outline of the Secret Doctrine, within which is the heart, the middle chamber of King Solomon's Temple wherein the "wages" are paid, and in which dwells the Overseer, the purified mind. This Overseer is comparable to *Darash*, the power of inductive reasoning, or inference. But there is One higher than the Overseer, and this is the Essence, the true Self, the Jewel which is the symbol of *Sud*, the Secret Divine Wisdom.

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The outer knowledge, the *Pshat*, is that of the apprentice ; the *Ramaz* method is for the craftsman ; the *Darash* serves the Master as a link to that exalted state which will one day be his, that of Past Master, in which he will be expected to learn the *secrets* of the art, to exercise his intuition, and to make real in himself the whole purpose of Freemasonry and of Life itself. The true Past Master is thus a follower of *Sud*, the secret way ; he is not necessarily supposed to be able to *remember* more of a written ritual than his brother Masons, but he is expected to be able to *instruct* them in the true meaning which lies hidden in all ritual. To him, all the so-called secrets of Freemasonry are in themselves as nothing, mere husks of realities, husks which must be broken open ere the life-giving grain can nourish man.

To the Qabalist, the Scripture could be interpreted in four ways, *viz.* : the literal-historical, the mythological, the mystical, and the fundamental or secret way.

The modern Christian mystic may now be called to confirm what has been written. The late Dr. Anna Kingsford, writing in her most illuminating work, *The Perfect Way*, declares emphatically that every symbol is fourfold in meaning, and instances the Cross, which has relation to " all four planes and

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all four worlds—phenomenal, intellectual, psychic, and celestial.” She continues :

“ Being thus the key of all the worlds, from the outer to the inner, the Cross presents, as it were, four wards or significations ; and according to these, the mystery of the Crucifixion bear relation :

First, to the natural and actual sense, and typifies the Crucifixion of the Man of God by the world.

Secondly, to the intellectual and philosophical sense, and typifies the Crucifixion *in* man of the lower nature.

Thirdly, to the personal and sacrificial sense, and symbolises the Passion and Oblation of the Redeemer.

Fourthly, to the celestial and creative sense, and represents the Oblation of God for the Universe.”

(It is interesting to note in passing that the sense symbolising the Oblation and Passion of the Redeemer, relates to all Redeemers, whether called Christ, or Hiram, the Widow's Son.)

Further, the Master says, “ Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but unto them that are without all those things are done in parables.”¹ Again He says : “ Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet ;”² and once more to His disciples :

“ I have yet many things to say unto you but ye cannot bear them now.”³

The famous *Sermon on the Mount*, which

¹ S. Mark IV., 11.

² S. Matt. VII., 6.

³ S. John XVI., 12.

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causes so much heartburning among the devout who vainly strive to live its precepts, is itself an inner teaching, and was given, not to the multitude, but only to the disciples, as noted in the text: "And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain: and when He was set His disciples came unto Him."¹ thus clearly showing that he avoided the multitude and did not expect them to be "perfect even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect."² This one incident alone would prove that, following the Hebrew custom, the Jewish Teacher knew of the inner as well as an outer teaching.

To those who oppose the idea of a secret or mystical teaching in Christianity by producing *Matthew X*, 26, it may be said, as was said by S. Clement of Alexandria, that certainly Truth must become manifest, but only according to the degree in which men were able to receive it.³

Origen, the Christian Father, who lived between 180 and 250 A.D., although accepting the orthodox beliefs, such as that of the Virgin Birth, etc., nevertheless understood the special method in which the scriptures were written, though he himself forgets to apply

¹ S. Matt., V. 1.

² S. Matt., V. 48.

³ *Stromata*, bk. XIV., par. 12.

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it to the New Testament. In his *De Principiis*¹, he shows that as man consists of body, soul, and spirit, so, likewise, are the scriptures written in a threefold manner, having a body, soul and spirit, an outer or historical meaning, a spiritual, and a deeper meaning. In ordinary language, and under the cover of literal stories, hidden mysteries were concealed; the description of battles, as given in the Old Testament, contains "certain ineffable mysteries which are made known to those who know how to investigate statements of this kind."

Origen accepts the inspiration of the Scriptures, but maintains that the wisdom of God caused to be mingled in the historical narrative "not a few things by which the history was, as it were, broken up so that the attention of the reader was recalled to a more strict examination of the inner meaning." He examines the Scriptures in order to explain this, and says :

"Who is there, pray, possessed of understanding, who will consider as appropriate the statement that at the creation, the first day, and the second and the third, in which also both evening and morning are mentioned, existed without sun, moon, and stars—the first day even without a sky? Who is so ignorant as to believe that God, like a gardener, planted trees in Eden, towards the East, and a tree of life therein, a visible and material tree of wood, so that anyone eating of it with bodily teeth should thus obtain life, and eating of the other tree come to a knowledge of good and evil. No one

¹ *Ibid*, bk. IV., chap. 1.

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can doubt, I think, that the statement that God walked in the afternoon in Paradise and that Adam hid himself under a tree are figurative allusions, and that some mystical meaning may be indicated."

He goes further, and adds :

"The same style of scriptural story is found abundantly in the Gospels, as when the devil is said to have placed Jesus on a lofty mountain that he might show Him the kingdoms of the world as if beneath his bodily eyes. Many other instances may be found in those narratives which appear to be literally written to show the reader that in them are inserted and interwoven things which cannot be admitted as historical, but which have a deep and spiritual signification."

Origen was the greatest Church-teacher of the East, says Dr. Neander, and was one of the earliest defenders of Christianity,¹ yet some of his translators waver between their modern orthodoxy (or fear of losing caste) and their desire to express appreciation of his great gifts. Thus the Rev. F. Crombie, M.A., Professor of Biblical criticism, in his translation of Origen,² speaks of "the illustrious Origen" whose "principles of interpreting Scripture are also brought out in this treatise," and says that "while not a little ingenuity is displayed in illustrating and maintaining them, the serious errors into which they *might* easily lead will be at once perceived by the reader." Perhaps the opposite may also be the case, for the present writer at least has not perceived these "serious errors!" In spite of this warning,

¹ See Origen's *Contra Celsus*.

² *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, vols. X. and XXIII.

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however, Crombie speaks very highly of this "admirable work of Origen," which "was written in the old age of our author, and is composed with great care ; while it abounds with proofs of the greatest erudition. *It is also perfectly orthodox.*"

This last is certainly a tremendous admission, and shows that it is not only the mystic who is the authority for the statements made in this work ; they are dependant as well on the writings of the orthodox !

Fabre D'Olivet likewise, says that Moses, in his *Book of Genesis*, has followed the methods of the Egyptian priests, who made use of three kinds of characters, the first being clear and simple and capable of expressing literal matters in a literal manner, the second expressing symbolic and figurative ideas, and the third sacred and hieroglyphical. Such was the genius of their tongue that the same word took, at their pleasure, the literal, figurative, or hieroglyphic, sense.

Heraclitus, quoted by this writer, also says that there are three styles of explanation ; these he designates by the epithets *spoken*, *significant*, and *hidden*. "The first two methods," says D'Olivet :

"those which consisted in taking words in the literal or figurative sense, were spoken ; but the third . . . existed but for the eyes, and was thus used only in writing. Our modern tongues are incapable of this distinction. Moses,

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initiated in all the mysteries of the Egyptian priesthood, made use of these three ways with unbounded skill. . . . presenting always three meanings to his words, so that no kind of word-for-word translation can render his thought."¹

This idea that most scripture has deeper significations than that which appears on the surface cannot be strange to those who have studied Eastern writings and know the figurative methods employed therein. This is found throughout the Old and New Testaments, and much controversy has raged because of the desire in the minds of the literalists to make a history of a mystery. They forget that the Bible, especially the first ten chapters of *Genesis* as understood in the original Hebrew, is a symbolically written narrative. Many thousands of commentaries have, consequently, been written to explain *a literal translation of a symbolical original*, which latter statement is here deliberately repeated.

This, it is true, is mainly in regard to the Old Testament, though even in the New Testament there are innumerable plays upon words and mysterious writings which can by no means be taken literally, notably the famous *Revelations*, for which every student has a different meaning. Some see "the beast" as the German Emperor, forgetting that in earlier times these revelations were

¹ *La Langue Hebraique Restituee*, Cosmogonie, VI.

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applied to what was happening in the world then ; others, more enlightened, and understanding the original Greek, insist that " the beast," which is 666, " the measure of a man," is *ho phren*, and signifies the passional mind of man, driven by desire and thus acting as an animal.

It may well be that there has been much orthodox caution at work, holding too tightly to the literal interpretation of Biblical things generally, and it is here, if anywhere, that the danger lies. It is good to follow the method of Pythagoras and take the golden mean in all things, to preserve the balance and walk carefully midway between the orthodox exaggerations and the numerical and other systems which tend to become manias when unscientifically handled.

H. P. Blavatsky says :

" There are very few in our days who are still prepared to assure their readers that the Bible ' had God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter.' "

" Could Locke be asked the question now, he would perhaps be unwilling to repeat again that the Bible is ' all pure, all sincere, nothing too much, nothing wanting.' "

" The Bible, if it is not to be shown to be the very reverse of all this, sadly needs an interpreter acquainted with the doctrines of the East, as they are to be found in its secret volumes ; nor is it safe now, after Archbishop Laurence's translation of the *Book of Enoch*, to cite Cowper and assure us that the Bible :

' . . . gives a light to every age,
It gives, but borrows none.' "

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for it does borrow and that very considerably ; especially in the opinion of those who, ignorant of its symbolical meaning and of the universality of the truths underlying and concealed in it, are able to judge only from its dead-letter appearance. It is a grand volume, a masterpiece composed of clever, ingenious fables containing great verities ; but it reveals the latter only to those who, like the Initiates, have a key to its inner meaning ; a tale sublime in its morality and didactics truly—still a tale and an allegory ; a repertory of invented personages in its older Jewish portions, and of dark sayings and parables in its later additions, and thus quite misleading to anyone ignorant of its Esotericism. Moreover, it is Astrolatry and Sabaeen worship, pure and simple, that is to be found in the Pentateuch when it is read exoterically, and Archaic Science and Astronomy to a most wonderful degree, when interpreted esoterically.”¹

The same writer says :

“ We must choose therefore perforce between two methods—either to accept the Bible exoterically or esoterically. Against the former we have the following facts : that after the first copy of the Book of God had been edited and launched on the world by Hilkiah, this copy disappeared, and Ezra had to make a *new Bible* which Judas Maccabeus finished ; that when it was copied from the horned letters into square letters, it was corrupted beyond recognition ; that the Masorah completed the work of destruction ; that finally we have a text . . . abounding with omissions, interpolations, and premeditated perversions ; and that, consequently, as this Masoretic Hebrew text has fossilised its mistakes, and the key to the ‘ word of God ’ is lost, no one has a right to enforce upon so-called ‘ Christians ’ the divagations of a series of hallucinated and, perhaps, spurious prophets, under the unwarranted and untenable assumption that the author of it was the ‘ Holy Ghost ’ in *propria personæ*. ”²

Let us now turn to the consideration of some of these matters in detail.

¹ *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd. ed., vol. iii., p. 8.

² *Isis Unveiled*.

CHAPTER TWO

ARE THERE TWO CREATION STORIES IN GENESIS?

As is well known to students of Scripture, many writers have noticed in the accounts of the Flood and the Creation, that not only do they bear marks of editing and re-writing, but that there appear to be two versions of the stories interwoven, one being more reasonable than the other, and each apparently contradicting the other.

Whether this is absolutely correct is difficult of proof; the evidence certainly shows that it needs consideration, and as it concerns the explanations of the stories which will be given in this work, it is, perhaps, well to devote a few pages to an elucidation.

This idea as to the existence and interweaving of the two accounts, was first well examined by English clerics round about the time of Bishop Colenso's challenge (1860), as to the historicity of the stories.¹ Writers who then and later took up the matter were

¹ See Colenso, *On the Pentateuch*. The actual idea of there being two stories is much earlier than Colenso's time, but he was the Bishop responsible for making it public in England.

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forced to the conclusion that two accounts of the Creation and Flood were, apparently, involved, and to this day the same arguments are repeated.

There are, however, two ways of reading these writings. The critics who consider only the literal version, easily prove that two writers are concerned in the narrative, because the stories interwoven seem to be written in two different styles. This, however, is not certain. The fact is that in one part of the narrative the word *Jehovah* appears and is translated *God*, whereas in another part the names *Jehovah-Elohim*, or merely *Elohim*, are given, and translated respectively *Lord God* and *God*. This confusion in the names leads many students to accept the idea that two stories are interwoven, but such evidence is inconclusive. What is certain is that the stories were edited and continually re-written, and the apparent contradictions left unnoticed until a very late date.

From Colenso's time until to-day, there have been many such criticisms, the later writers sometimes copying from the earlier ones, sometimes making the necessary researches themselves. They, of course, follow the literal translation all the time, and so do not realise that even though the statements be contradictory, the truth of the cosmic

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story is behind them and is not impaired to any great extent by such discrepancies.

Of the more modern criticisms, that by Frazer, is, perhaps, one of the most exact, especially as he compares the original Hebrew with the English authorised version. Yet, in spite of this, he saw only the literal narrative and did not realise the truth behind it, for the simple reason that he had not the key. His criticism is the most simple, though certainly that of Bishop Colenso is the more full and scholarly.

"In this account of the deluge," says Frazer,

"Biblical critics are now agreed in detecting the presence of two originally distinct and partially inconsistent narratives, which have been combined to present the superficial appearance of a single homogeneous story. Yet the editorial task of uniting them has been performed so clumsily that the repetitions and inconsistencies left standing in them can hardly fail to attract the attention of even a careless reader."¹

He prints the two versions, making, by means of italics, a distinction between them which he says is now generally accepted by critics. He mentions the sources of his information, which are, however, all of a very late date, and says nothing of Bishop Colenso and the earlier writers, who were the most notable of the originators of the controversy.

¹ *Folk-lore in the Old Testament*, p. 130.

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The two documents, he says :

“ differ conspicuously in character and style and they belong to different ages ; for while the *Jehovistic* narrative is probably the oldest, the Priestly code (that is to say, those parts in which the word *Elohim* occurs with or without the word *Jehovah*) is now generally admitted to be the latest . . . and believed to have been written in Judea ; the former (*Jehovistic*) dates to probably the ninth or eighth century before our era ; the Priestly code (*Elohistic*) dates from the period after the year 586 B.C., when Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, and the Jews were carried away by him into captivity.”

This is, however, open to question, and the writer himself is merely quoting from W. Robertson Smith's *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, p. 445. It is more probable that the whole story was written up by the scribe Ezra from various documents before him at the time. This idea appears even more feasible in the light of the modern discoveries by the University of Pennsylvania, which show that the story of Creation and the Flood as told by the Babylonians was but a copy of a very much older account left them by the former inhabitants of Babylonia, the Sumerians, who were not Semites, but an older race of people.

All these points matter very little as regards the purpose of the present work, which is to attempt an explanation of the actual stories, with all their modern faults ; it would, nevertheless, be inadvisable to evade them, because so many students consider that they

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prove the stories mere folk-lore and fairy-tales, whereas, as a matter of fact, the stories enshrine cosmic history and deep metaphysical truths.

It will be necessary, then, to give some explanation as to how these two accounts are interwoven, and how they differ.

In the first Chapter of *Genesis*, during the six days of creation, and until the third verse of the second chapter, the English version speaks of *God* creating, the Hebrew word used being *Elohim* (ALHIM). From that point until *verse* 3 of Chapter III, the English words *Lord God* are mainly used, the Hebrew being *Jehovah-Elohim* (YHVH-ALHIM). Immediately after the birth of Cain (Ch. IV. v. 1.), Eve declares that she has "gotten a man from the Lord," and the Hebrew word *Jehovah* (YHVH) stands for the first time alone and continues until almost the end of the chapter. In Chapter V., the word *Elohim* (*God*), once more appears alone, but suddenly (*verse* 29) gives place once more to *Jehovah*, which is again translated *Lord*. In Chapter VI., the word *Elohim* (*God*) stands as it did in the first chapter, but is used alternately with *Lord* (YHVH). In Chapter VII., *Jehovah* ("the Lord") is again replaced by *Elohim* (*God*), and also in Chapter VII., except at the end, *verses* 21-22, and so on.

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This is apparently one of the reasons why the critics have concluded that two writers are responsible for the stories, and they distinguish them by calling one *Jehovistic* and the other *Elohistic*. Yet as there are parts of the stories where the two names are used as one, *Jehovah-Elohim*, it would be equally reasonable to assume that three writers were concerned with the complex narrative.

On the ground, then, that different names are used for the Creator, it cannot be said that the story gives proof of two or three different writers. *On the contrary, it seems more likely to have been the work of one editor doing his best to make a purely monotheistic narrative from more ancient polytheistic stories, such as the Babylonian traditions.*

On the other hand, there are differences in the account which cannot so easily be brushed aside, and it is to these that the critics point as proving that two stories are interwoven. Thus Frazer,¹ who states that he has studied the Hebrew version, finds that in the *Jehovistic* version (Ch. VII., v. 2) the Hebrew words used for *male and female* are *Aish* and *Aishta*, whereas in the *Elohistic* version (Ch. VI., v. 19, and VII., v. 9, 16), the words

¹ *Folk-lore in the Old Testament*, I., p. 137.

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translated *male and female* are *Zochar* and *Nekavah* (i.e., *Lingam* and *Yoni—incisio, vesica piscis*, etc.). Yet even in this case the idea is not well-founded and gives no surety of two writers, for the words *Aish* and *Aisha* are used indiscriminately for *male and female, man and woman* or even *man and wife*, as the Hebrew commentators note, and the Samaritan version uses *Zochar and Nekavah* where the Hebrew has *Aish and Aisha*.

The student will notice that Adam is formed in *verse 7, Chapter II., of Genesis*, and that previous to this "there was not a man to till the ground"; *the animals were created later* (see v. 19). Yet in the earlier part of *Genesis* (Chapter I., *verse 24*), the animals are first created and man follows (v. 27). This is found also in the Babylonian stories.

These are facts which cause the critics to conclude that two separate stories are interwoven in the narrative. But this is not necessarily so, as we find in considering the matter from another point of view. H. P. Blavatsky says that the "animals" created before "man" in the first chapter, are the "Cosmic" animals, that is, the signs of the Zodiac, whilst the "man" represents the cosmic beings, the host of cosmic forces, or Angels, who are made in God's image. This

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puts aside the idea that the human being, as a body, is made in the image of God, yet, as will be seen later, there is a further explanation which shows that even the human form was made in the image of the *Elohim*, the Creative Powers (*Pitris*).

The same writer says that the "God" of the first chapter of *Genesis* is the Logos, and the "Lord God" of the second chapter the *Elohim*, the creative powers.¹ It should be mentioned, however, that even if this writer is correct, the words themselves are not, for the word *God* of Chapter I. is, in the original, *Elohim*, whilst the words *Lord God* are *Jehovah-Elohim*. In any case, these views tend to show that there are not two stories blended in one narrative, but that the account contains many different aspects of creation which, though roughly thrown together, are none the less capable of being understood.

Frazer also states that *verse 2* of Chapter VII. is a *Jehovistic* writing, because the word *Jehovah* is used in the preceding verse. But in the Samaritan version, the statement is evidently *Elohistic*, for the verse reads "and God said" (*Elohim* said), whilst the Hebrew states "the Lord (*Jehovah*) said."

There are other and more serious discrepancies which cannot be so easily

¹ *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd ed., vol. II., p. 1.

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explained. Thus *Genesis*, Chapter VII., *verse* 17, declares that the *flood* was upon the earth "forty days and nights," whereas *verse* 12 says that the *rain* was upon the earth. In *verse* 24, it is stated that "the waters prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days," but according to *verses* 8 to 12 of Chapter VII., Noah was in the ark three weeks after the "forty days," *i.e.*, sixty-one days in all, while *verse* 13 says that the flood lasted until the six hundred and first year and one month (of Noah's life), and *verse* 14 states that the flood was not completely dried up until the seven and twentieth day of the second month—thus giving its duration as twelve months and ten days.

All these contradictions are not, of course, to be taken seriously, for they are merely errors. Yet it is curious to note that there is a suggestion of time-measuring here, which shows that the flood is not an earthly matter, as will be explained later. This is a curious muddle in a purely historical narrative, and gives those writers who see everything as a solar myth good cause to claim that the story of the Flood is of that nature.

It is interesting to note the views of another well-known writer on this subject. C. W. King, M.A., in the *Schweich Lectures* (p. 42) says :

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"In any comparison it is usually admitted that two accounts have been combined in the Hebrew narrative. I should like to point out that this assumption may be made by anyone, whatever his views may be with regard to the textual problems of the Hebrew Bible and the traditional authorship of the Pentateuch. And for our purpose at the moment it is immaterial whether we identify the compiler of these Hebrew narratives with Moses himself, or with some later Jewish historian whose name has not come down to us."

It should be noticed that he does not suggest that this later scribe may have been Ezra, as has already been hinted and as is most likely, for it is said that he was "a ready scribe in the Law of Moses."¹ Moreover, it was at this period, in the reign of Cyrus and at the end of the Babylonian sojourn, that the religious affairs of the Hebrews were re-organised and the Temple rebuilt. With the permission of Artaxerxes, at a later date, Ezra went up to Jerusalem and "prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord and do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments."² Artaxerxes, moreover, instructed him: "And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know not."³

It is, therefore, quite reasonable to conclude, with many writers, that "the lost books of

¹ *Ezra*, VII., 6.

² *Ibid.*, V., 19.

³ *Ezra*, VII., 25.

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Moses were restored by Ezra.”¹ or that he was the adaptor of the modernised books.² H. P. Blavatsky even suggests³ that Ezra may have been the author of the *Book of Moses*, which does not seem *entirely* improbable.

She says further :

“ It is sufficient to read the criticisms of Erasmus, and even of Sir Isaac Newton, to see clearly that the Hebrew Scriptures had been tampered with and remodelled, had been lost and rewritten a dozen times before the days of Ezra. This Ezra himself may turn out to have been Azara,⁴ the Chaldaean priest of the Fire and Sun-God, a renegade who, through his desire of becoming a ruler, and in order to create an Ethnarchy, restored the old lost Jewish books in his own way. It was an easy thing for one versed in the secret system of Esoteric numerals, or symbology, to put together events from the stray books that had been preserved by various tribes, and make of them an apparently harmonious narrative of creation and of the evolution of the Judæan race. . . . Its co-ordination, however, is only apparent ; and the human hand appears at every moment.”⁵

This same writer quotes a few lines from S. Clement, the Christian Father, which do not appear to have seen the light of day in other commentaries. He says that :

“ . . . the scriptures having perished in the captivity of Nebuchodonozar, Esdras, the Levite, the priest, in the times of Artaxerxes, king of the Persians, having become inspired in the exercise of prophecy, restored again the whole of the ancient scriptures.” (*Stromata*, XXII.).

It is as well that the good Father mentioned this, else would the statement, emanating

¹ *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd ed., vol. II, p. 483.

² *Ibid.*, vol. II., p. 152.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. II., p. 474.

⁴ Azarias was the Father of Ezra according to the Second Book of Esdras (ch. i., 1.).

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. II., p. 172.

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from such a source as Madame Blavatsky, have received scant attention from those who misguidedly judge her as a destroyer, rather than as *the light-bringer and founder of a new epoch in philosophy and religion she is considered by the present writer and thousands of others throughout the world.*

However, it matters little who wrote the stories, for the truth, even though distorted, is still to be found within them, and when compared with the ancient writings from which, doubtless, they were compiled, can be understood in the sense intended by the ancient initiates.

C. W. King states that the scribe "has scrupulously preserved his two texts, and even when they differ he has given each as he found it. Thanks to this fact anyone, by a careful examination of the narrative, can disentangle the two versions for himself. He will find each gives a consistent story. One of them appears to be simpler and more primitive than the other."¹ This disentangling, however, is not such an easy matter as the professor imagined, and he himself did not succeed in it.

It must be confessed that there are extraordinary contradictions in the Scriptures which may be seized upon by would-be

¹ Schweich Lectures, p. 42.

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destroyers of religion ; they form good handles for those who read them in the purely literal sense and in a tongue other than the original. But examining these contradictions from a higher point of view, it is possible to find such a wealth of information behind them that the Scriptures become real and living things, not mere empty forms, but chalices brimming with Divine Wisdom.

Thus, in Chapter *I.* of *Genesis*, the animals are first created ; this refers to a period of evolution not on this earth. In Chapter *II.*, the animals are the second to appear, Adam being first, and it is he who names them : this is descriptive of the present period of evolution on this earth. It is in the archetypal world that creation first takes place, and the account of creation given in the first chapter of *Genesis* refers not to earth but to heaven, the world of emanations ; whilst the second refers to the bringing together, the shaping-up and preparing, of the ideas of the higher world.

Thus the Bible is not alone an account of the creation of our little world and of man, but is of far greater scope, relating to the whole cosmos. It is all largely in the cosmic sense, but is, of course, repeated on lower planes.

The same idea is found in the Qabalistic

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work, *Zohar*, which states that when the Holy One wished to create, all the worlds were present *in idea* before Him, and only in a later period was the *actual*, *i.e.*, outer, creation continued.

According to qabalistic teachings, there are four Adams, as there are four "worlds," or planes, as modern Theosophists term them. The first is the Adam *qadmon*, or the Adam "outside" of space and time, God Himself and the archetypal creation within His consciousness, *i.e.*, the primordial manifestation of God ; the second Adam is the Adam of the world of "Creation," slightly more materialised, being, in a way, an image of the *creation-in-Ideation* reflected in the world (or plane) of *creation in thought* ; the third is the collective creation in the world of forms ; whilst the fourth brings to being the actual material creation of the earth and also the human kingdom, or collective man (ADAM). Thus only the fourth Adam is man as known after the "Fall," clothed in "coats of skin," *i.e.*, in a material form.

Creation, then, as set forth in the first chapter of *Genesis*, where it is said : "We *will* make man in our own image."¹ took place, primitively, in the world of Ideation, or in the mind of "God" ; that is to say,

¹ Or "Let us make man," in any case a future tense.

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the idea of making Adam was expressed in the future tense ; it did not yet take outward form. In the second chapter we read "VADM AIN," "and Adam was not," or, as in the authorised version, "there was no man (to till the ground.)" It is only in *verse 7 of Chapter II.* that the form is created "out of the dust of the ground." (This will be explained in the story of the Garden of Eden which, in the esoteric interpretation, gives much food for contemplation).

Similar ideas are also found in the Greek writing, *The Chaldean Oracles* (trans. Cory), where it is said that from the *Nous*, the Inner Mind, of the Father, sprang omniform ideas as from a single fountain, and were divided and spread abroad.

"For the King previously placed before the multiple world an intellectual, incorruptible pattern, the print of which form is promoted through the world, according to which things the world appeared beautified with all-various Ideas. . . . The primary self-perfect fountain of the Father poured forth these primogenial ideas."¹

A little further on, it is said that the plastic Substance from which the worlds and all things are formed, received the impress of the Divine Thought or Idea. "*Rhea*, the fountain and river of the blessed Intellectuals, having first received the powers of all things in her ineffable bosom, pours forth perpetual

¹ *The Chaldean Oracles*, p. 248.

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generation upon every thing."¹ This *Rhea*, as a "matrix, contains all things,"² contains all divisions and yet is indivisible, pervading the whole of space.

Other have noticed this ideal creation preceding the actual creation. The famous Thomas Vaughan writes of it in his strange but splendid work, *Anthroposophia Theomagica* (1648), where he points out that before all things were made, God meditated on the creation which was to come. He says :

That meditation foreruns every solemn work is a thing so well known to man that he needs no further demonstration of it than his own practice. That there is also in God something analogical to it, from whence man derives this customary notion of his, as it is agreeable to reason, so withal is it very suitable to Providence. 'The Gods,' says Iamblichus, 'did conceive the whole work within themselves before it was brought forth by them.' "

Vaughan mentions the vision of Esdras, when God (the Angel speaking for Him) says to Esdras that before all things were created He had *considered* them.³ He also suggests, and it must be remembered how far back was the date of his writing, that creation took place first in the mind of God and was then impressed as a pattern in space, or, as he says, "in those primitive waters, like an

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

² *Ibid.*, p. 260.

³ *Esdras*, bk. 2, VI. 6.

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image in glass." He speaks of "the idea" of God, and says :

"The idea I speak of here is the true, primitive, exemplar one, and a pure influence of the Almighty. This idea, before the coagulation of the seminal principles to a gross outward fabric—which is the end of generation—impresseth in the vital, ethereal principles a model or pattern after which the body is to be framed, and this as the first inward production or draft of the creature. This it is which the Divine Spirit intimates to us in that scripture where He saith that God created 'every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew.' (*Genesis II., 5*)"

This idea of a pre-creative meditation is found in many scriptures, notably in the Hindu, as will be seen later. Other writers than those quoted have noticed it, as also the statement that Adam was first created and that later there was no Adam (man) "to till the ground." The words of Vaughan, however, are interesting as showing that these ideas were working even in that distant and supposedly dark age. A. E. Waite, in editing a new edition of these writings of Vaughan, recalls the fact that there is nothing new in the statement, since it is but a "combination of Kabalistic and Platonic theosophy"; yet it was new to those to whom it was given, and is unknown to many to this day.

CHAPTER THREE

ARE THE GENESIS STORIES ORIGINAL?

The idea that Moses was learned in the lore of the Egyptians offers a key to many who believe that the *Book of Genesis* is written symbolically. Indeed, it is the belief of the writer that the first ten chapters of *Genesis* constitute all that remains of a book of ritual appertaining to the *Mysteries*, whether of Egypt, Greece, or Rome, gathered together from even earlier sources. Donnelly, in his *Atlantis*, expresses the opinion that their origin was in Atlantis itself, and this may well be so.

From time immemorial, as has already been said, there has existed the inner doctrine known to the few and the literal or outer teaching accepted by the people. As Christ taught His disciples in secret, or "in the house," reserving for those who could understand the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," so with those other and lesser Masters who inaugurated the ceremonies

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and teachings which together are generically termed *The Mysteries*.¹

In these *Mysteries*, the facts of Nature hidden from the ignorant masses were taught to a chosen few by means of symbol and allegory, and by pictorial dances, and in the deeper *Mysteries* by pictures visible for a while to the stimulated clairvoyant faculty of the disciple, pictures which were seen only by those who were called the "Mystae," those who had but to lift the last corner of the veil to see and understand Truth in its nakedness.

The true Mystery teaching is to be seen in these stories of the *Book of Genesis*, veiled with great care, but clear to all who have the key, or who understand the inferential way of reading.

Many have thought that the whole of the Scripture has been re-written and edited in order to make it appear more historical, and that it has "the appearance of being carefully revised with an ethical purpose."² Whether this is so or not, the first ten chapters of *Genesis* still contain the secret teachings relating to Astronomy and the birth and growth of the Universe, to the development of this world and other worlds in space, and

¹ The reader who is not familiar with the subject will find an outline of its history in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and in many other works.

² St. Clair, *The Secret of Genesis*.

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to the development of the human and other kingdoms. They were written symbolically so that, according to the plane from which they were viewed, would the teaching relating to that plane be understood.

Hence it is accepted by many students, following the teaching of H. P. Blavatsky, that every symbol and symbolical writing has seven meanings, according to the plane on which it is viewed. For the present purpose, it is sufficient to consider only the four which have already been explained from the Hebrew standpoint ; but in order to have evidence from various sources, and also because of its erudition, the teaching from *The Secret Doctrine* is appended :

“ For the comprehension of the Occult Doctrine is based upon that of the Seven Sciences ; and these sciences find their expression in the seven different applications of the Secret Records to the exoteric texts. Thus we have to deal with modes of thought on seven entirely different planes of Ideality. Every text relates to, and has to be rendered from, one of the following standpoints :

1. The Realistic Plane of Thought.
2. The Idealistic.
3. The purely Divine or Spiritual.

The other planes too far transcend the average consciousness, especially of the materialistic mind, to admit of their being even symbolised in terms of ordinary phraseology. There is no purely mythical element in any of the ancient religious texts ; but the mode of thought in which they were originally written has to be found out and closely adhered to during the process of interpretation. For it is symbolical, the archaic mode of thought ; emblematical, a later though

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very ancient mode of thought ; parabolical or allegorical ; hieroglyphical ; or again, logographical, the most difficult method of all ; every letter, as in the Chinese language, representing a whole word. Thus, almost every proper name, whether in the Vedas, the Book of the Dead, or, to a certain degree, in the Bible, is composed of such logograms. No one not initiated into the mystery of the occult religious logography can presume to know what a name in any ancient fragment means, before he has mastered the meaning of every letter that composes it."¹

It should, then, be remembered that the *Genesis* stories apply, according to the method by which the symbols are interpreted, not only to the literal history of a world and its inhabitants, but also to the history of a Universe. They are to be understood, that is, in many ways—historically, astronomically, terrestrially, cosmically, metaphysically, numerically (as relating to time-measuring processes), etc. ; though it is, of course, impossible to explain every myth and symbol from each and every point of view.

The astronomical and time-measuring method has been used by a few writers who have endeavoured to understand the *Book of Genesis*, notably Railston Skinner and George St. Clair. Their explanations are, however, very difficult, and need much thought ; for to decipher symbolical writings is one thing, and to understand that which is thus revealed another.

¹ H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd ed., vol. II., p. 350.

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In the present work, the metaphysical and cosmic meanings of *Genesis* will be presented and considered, together with the terrestrial happenings and the human aspects of the symbols.

"That the narratives (of *Genesis*) are not literal," says St. Clair, "ought not to surprise us. The ancients spoke much in figure and allegory and dealt much in symbolic and dramatic representation. Egyptologists can translate the book of the Dead, but they tell us they cannot understand it because very often a mystic or mythic meaning underlies the grammatical. Theologians are often in the same position, for it was the way of the biblical writers to use figurative language. . . . The legends of *Genesis* are allegories; and so old that the very language of them has long been disused and dead . . . hardly anything is called by its ordinary and direct name, but things are indirectly alluded to under some other name, and every word has to be understood as implying something else than its ordinary connotation."¹

He further reminds his readers that :

"the books of the Bible . . . were penned by many authors and extend over many centuries in their composition; so that errors in one part should not vitiate the whole. It will here be contended that not even the *Book of Genesis* is to be given up as discredited but that rather, when read aright, it is a substantially true record of events."²

With these sentiments the writer of the present work is in perfect agreement. It is, however, difficult to discover the true record without the key. Obviously no man of sense, as Origen puts it, will take the *Genesis* stories literally. Who would believe that a snake on two legs could have tempted the first woman to lead her perfect husband on to the

¹ *The Secret of Genesis*, p. 10.

² *Ibid.*, p. 16.

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breaking of a simple rule which precipitated them both out of a beautiful Garden of Delight, and brought the present evils to humanity ; that the sufferings of humanity ever since, and the pangs of labour which the woman alone knows, are the result ?¹

Other curiosities abound, such as the snake on two legs who has the power of speech : the naming by Adam of the animals led before him, like some huge circus, by God : the flaming sword which never melted away from above the gate of the Garden after the departure of Adam and Eve : the walking of God in the Garden in the cool of the day ; the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ; and the four rivers which never have been geographically found. All these things surely prove that there was not the remotest intention on the part of the original writers of detailing merely historical happenings.

“ While these ancient stories were taken literally,” says St. Clair, “ it was easy to carp at them ; when the true meaning is made plain they will command respect.”²

It has long been imagined that the Old

¹ In this connection, it is to be observed that no apple is mentioned in the original scripture, and never in the translations, not even the English *authorised* version. Yet, curiously enough, all the world repeats the story that Eve gave an apple to Adam after having herself been tempted by the Snake.

² *The Secret of Genesis*, p. 10.

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Testament is the word of God, either written "from cover to cover" by Him, or directly inspired from the Divine Source. Gradually, however, as the work of excavators has progressed in many lands, and translations of writings on ancient monuments have been obtained, this view has become more modified. Indeed, in these modern days, it is no longer possible to consider the *Genesis* stories as actual and original historical narratives relating merely to a "chosen people." That they are partly historical is undeniable ; but in the light of modern research, and the translations of the ancient Sumerian, Assyrian, and Babylonian texts from the stones and cylinders of ages past, it is impossible to doubt that the Hebrew scribes recorded events which were already traditions of the people amongst whom they themselves sojourned.

It may be conceded that in spite of such editing, or even because of it, these later *Genesis* stories are, in a certain sense, superior to their predecessors ; for if an original story is written and re-written, age after age, it is inevitable that, with the growing knowledge of mankind, the style of writing would be improved, and the crudities toned down. But the facts recorded are not altered thereby, nor are they necessarily improved, as may be

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found by comparing them with the translations from the ancient stones upon which the originals are recorded.

It is now realised by those who do not fear to face new facts, that the Old Testament, far from being a complete work, is a collection of many different manuscripts arranged and collected together, and declared "genuine" by councils of men, often self-appointed to the work and not always sufficiently educated to judge of the value of ancient documents, who certainly knew nothing of the original writings or of the now-discovered stones.

Prof. Albert Clay, in a series of lectures to Bible classes, since published by The Sunday School Times Co., under the title of *Light on the Old Testament from Babylon*, says that although much evidence has been produced through the archeological researches of modern times as to the "historical character of portions of the Old Testament," yet

"certain discoveries have given a totally different conception of other portions, forcing us to lay aside a number of antiquated views, and to reconstruct our ideas on many important questions. Old interpretations, which have been copied or revised by a succession of commentators, and have been handed down from century to century, disappear, and that which approaches nearer to the truth becomes known. . . . While we are disappointed in not being able to reach still nearer the primitive beginnings, our knowledge of the history of man has been projected backward several thousand years, and is attended by many surprises. We find that cultured peoples antedated Israel by milleniums; and that instead

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of Abraham's descendants belonging to the dawn of history, they lived in the late pre-Christian period ; instead of Israel being an all-powerful nation of antiquity, we find that with the exception of the time in the days of David and Solomon, when the borders of the nation were temporarily extended, it scarcely can be classed with such world-conquering powers as Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, Persia and other nations."

Ibid, p. 4-5.

Thus the stories in *Genesis* are now found to be copies of early editions of similar narratives, or at least compilations of such records. The difficulty with some is to determine whether the stories of Babylonia are earlier than the *Genesis* stories, or *vice versa*, but no true archeologist or other unprejudiced student would wish to give first place to *Genesis*, for it is obviously a much later collection of writings.

These references are to the tablets discovered by the expedition sent out from Pennsylvania in 1914, particulars of which may be found in the books published by the Museum of Philadelphia, as well as in such books as Jastrow's *Hebrew and Babylonian Tradition*, *The Seven Tablets of Creation* (1914), and Hilprecht's *Explorations in Bible Lands*. The results of the excavations deal with the writings upon the stones found at the ancient city of Nippur, one of the oldest of all the ancient cities.

According to the leading authorities on the subject, the stories deciphered from the

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stones are similar to those of *Genesis*. L. W. King, M.A., the well-known authority on, and Keeper of, the Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in the British Museum, states that "there is a great bulk of new material of recent discovery of some early texts, written towards the close of the third millenium B.C., which incorporate traditions extending from this period far back into the remote periods in unbroken outline," texts which, he says, claim equally with *Genesis* to trace the history of man back to creation.¹

"They represent," he continues, "the early national tradition of the Sumerian people, who preceded the Semites or the ruling race in Babylonia; and, incidentally, they necessitate a revision of current views with regard to the cradle of Biblical civilisation. The most remarkable of the new documents is one which relates in poetical narrative an account of the creation, of antediluvian history, and of the deluge. It thus exhibits a close resemblance in structure to the corresponding Hebrew tradition. . . . More primitive than any of the Semitic versions. . . . They are written in the language spoken by non-semitic people, whom the Semitic Babylonians conquered and displaced, and they include a very primitive

¹ Preface to *Legends of Babylonia and Egypt in Relation to Hebrew Tradition*.

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version of the Deluge story and the creation myth."¹

There are still many who consider that the Bible versions of these stories are infinitely superior to the ancient writings, because in the former the stories are told in relation to the One God, whereas on the earlier stones they are mainly polytheistic. The late Canon Driver touched upon this in his lectures,² when he said :

"The Babylonian narratives are both polytheistic, while the corresponding Biblical narratives are made the vehicle of a pure and exalted monotheism ; *but in spite of this fundamental difference . . . the resemblances are such as to leave no doubt that the Hebrew cosmogony and the Hebrew story of the deluge are both ultimately from the same original.*"

An equally valid theory would be that the Hebrews copied the ancient stories and incorporated them in their scriptures, for it has been discovered that some of these are far older even than the people amongst whom Israel sojourned. Nevertheless, this is a striking acknowledgment coming from such an orthodox source, though the idea that the *Genesis* writings are superior merely because they relate the stories monotheistically instead of polytheistically, is open to question. It might also well be suggested that the statement is not entirely accurate, for an unprejudiced reader, who knows the original

¹ *Legends of Babylonia and Egypt*, p. 1.

² *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible* (1908).

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Hebrew and has studied the Sumerian version also, will realise that the plurality of Powers described in the Sumerian are to be compared with the plurality of Powers in the original Hebrew version, whether the latter be called collectively *Elohim* or translated, as in modern versions, by the singular *God*, *Jehovah*, *Adonai*, etc. All these things make little difference to the *mythos* itself.

There is, however, no doubt that Ezra, or the later editors of the *Genesis* stories, endeavoured to fit them into the monotheistic belief current amongst the Hebrews. Canon Driver, though acknowledging the stories to be unoriginal, nevertheless states, as proving the superiority of the Hebrew version, that they were "transformed by the magic touch of Israel's religion and infused by it with a new spirit."¹ This may be so, but no explanation has as yet been given which proves the superiority of the modern version over the ancient in its essential points.

Bishop Colenso, writing many years ago, quotes many writers to show that there were earlier legends amongst nations more ancient than the Hebrew, and includes the following from the very orthodox and literal Tuch :

"If we compare," says Tuch, "these oriental speculations with the Hebrew cosmogony, it must be plain that we cannot seek the first free evolution of the legend among the Hebrew

¹ *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible*, p. 23.

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people, but must consider it as an inheritance which their ancestors brought with them into their new place of settlement. Yet withal the glory remains to the Hebrews for having placed this inheritance in the most beautiful and exalted form, in connection with their purer ideas of deity."¹

Delitsch, also quoted by Colenso, while clinging to the utmost to the traditional view, yet admits, as the necessary result of his enquiries, the following points :

" The creation story was not revealed to the writer of *Genesis* I., 1-23, whoever he may have been, but, if revealed at all—if it was not, in its original form, the expression of the clear-sighted intuition of man before the Fall—was revealed within the family of the first made man and from then handed down by tradition, from Adam to Enos, etc., and from them to Noah and his family.

At the ' confusion of tongues,' it was shattered . . . and existed henceforward in broken fragments in different nations—the most perfect perhaps in Babylonia.

From Babylon, perhaps, or perhaps in direct line within the chosen family, the writer of *Genesis* may have received the tradition which, before it had reached him had lived through many metamorphoses."²

This derivation of the *Genesis* stories from older records has its parallel in the Mosaic and Levitical Laws, which were thought to be original and impossible of emulation until the discovery of the Code of (C)*hammurabi* at the great mound, the Acropolis of Susa, in 1901-2, by M. de Morgan.³

This wonderful stone, which is of black diorite, may be viewed at any time in the

¹ Colenso, *On the Pentateuch*, Vol. IV., p. 120.

² *Ibid.*, p. 123.

³ *Memoires de la Delegation en Perse*, par Père Scheil.

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British Museum. At the top is seen a representation of *Shèmask*, the Sun-God, handing to King (*C*)*hammurabi* the dual tablets of stone on which the Law is inscribed. *Shèmask* is seated on a stone throne upon an edifice ; he wears swathed head-gear and a flounced robe, and from his shoulders radiate sun-rays, whilst he clasps a sceptre and a ring in his right hand. King (*C*)*hammurabi*, who by some writers has been identified with the biblical *Amraphel*, contemporary of Abraham (*Gen.* XIV.) stands before (the) God in a reverent attitude, evidently picturing the idea which Ezra or some later scribe wove into the story of Moses receiving the two tables of stone from God on Mount Sinai.

This Code is said to be about 4,225 years old, but it may well be much older, for the authorities did not, in the early days of these discoveries, wish to go too carelessly against rigid sectarian opinion.

With reference to it, Dr. Driver, speaking as an orthodox leader and Canon of his Church, says that there are "resemblances which call for explanation," and that "while direct borrowing on the part of the Hebrew legislators is not probable, the two codes do stand in some *direct* relation towards each other, either both, in the provisions which

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are similar, exhibit independent codifications of old customary Semitic usage, common to the ancestors of both the Babylonians and the Hebrews, or some knowledge of (C)*ham-murabi's* laws reached the Hebrews indirectly.”¹

This is a poor apology, and does not explain the need for all these objections to the idea that the Hebrews copied ancient laws and traditions; yet if he were to acknowledge this, the Canon would have to acknowledge that earlier nations than the Hebrew were favoured with Divine Command, and that the Hebrew Scriptures were not original.

Long previous to the archeological discoveries which have had such a profound effect on Biblical scholarship and Biblical research generally, there were those who saw that the Old Testament stories were not a new revelation. Thus Bishop Lawrence, in his translation of the *Book of Enoch*, mentions a quotation from a catalogue of Bruce's manuscripts in which the Rev. E. Murray made a note to the effect that “the narrative (of *Enoch*) is bold and fabulous, but highly impressive of the sentiments and character of those speculative enthusiasts who blended the Chaldaic philosophy with the Sacred history of the Jews.”²

¹ *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible*, p. 27.

² *Ibid* (1838), p. XIX.

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That the Babylonian stories are either the originals from which the Hebrews copied, or that they have been blended with other traditions, is now accepted by most Assyriologists. Indeed, so deep an impression did the Babylonian discoveries make upon the minds of students and theologians that the Sunday School Times Publishing Co., and even The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, took up the subject, and treated it in a very sympathetic manner, the latter publishing a valuable book on them by T. B. Pinches, LL.D., M.R.A.S., wherein valuable comparisons are made and the differences in the two stories pointed out. The orthodox writer, however, carefully states that, in spite of all these resemblances, "it must not be thought that it interferes with the doctrine of inspiration."

This is suspiciously like what might be termed "playing to the gallery." Nevertheless, the writer does not leave the matter there, and continues :

"Without binding ourselves down to any hard and fast line as to date, we may regard, for the purposes of this enquiry, the Hebrew account of Creation as one of the traditions handed down in the thought of many minds extending over many centuries and as *having been chosen and elaborated by the inspired writer of Genesis for the purpose of his narrative.*"¹

Dr. Skinner, the well-known commentator on *Genesis*, dealing with various passages

¹ *The Old Testament in the Light of Historical Records*, p. 11.

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which are akin to the biblical, says : "in view of these passages it seems impossible to doubt that the cosmogony of *Genesis* rests on a conception of the process of creation fundamentally identical with that of the Babylonian tablets"; and adds "it was long ago apparent that the Bible account of Creation is in its main conceptions Babylonian."¹

"Many features in the biblical account of creation," says Morris Jastrow, "are not at all original; they find their parallel in the Babylonian versions and, like the latter, point to the real character of the tale as a nature myth. . . . But in the form assumed by the old traditions regarding the Creation and the Deluge, once held in common by the Hebrews and the Babylonians, reduces the original mythical element to a minimum. So thoroughly has the process been carried out that it was only through the discovery of the parallel tales on cuneiform tablets that the original character of the biblical Creation and Deluge stories was revealed. . . . The story, retained partly because of its popularity, partly because of that natural desire to carry back history to its beginnings, is in all other respects completely remodelled and becomes a sublime poem, furnishing in impressive diction the picture of a great, spiritually

¹ *Genesis*, p. 41.

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conceived power creating the universe by the mere utterance of his intent—God wills and it comes to pass . . . The narrative of the order of Creation becomes merely the illustration used in order to bring out this conception of Deity, due to the transformation that the view of divine government underwent among the Hebrews through the influence of the prophets.”¹

“ But this biblical story is raised far above the level of a primitive tale as the nature-myth underlying the story of the Deluge is removed into an entirely different sphere, by their both being made the medium for illustrating the dire consequences of disobedience to the dictates of a God who demands adherence to His behests, that are promulgated in man’s interest.”²

“ Primitive tales are thus retained and transformed. They are given a new interpretation in the light of the teachings of the prophets whose discourses are all so many melodies based on the one theme—the dire results of disobedience.”³

Yet in spite of his sympathetic treatment of the Bible stories, Jastrow confirms, with many other authors, the belief held by the present writer, namely, that they are “*edited*”

¹ *Hebrew and Babylonian Traditions*, pp. 37 & 39.

² *Ibid.*, p. 40.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

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editions, improved or not, as the case may be, by different writers (or by Ezra), since the Babylonian sojourn.

The well-known John Skinner, D.D., late Principal and Professor of O. T. Languages and Literature at Cambridge (1910), says : " The influence of foreign mythology is most apparent in the primitive traditions (*Genesis*, Ch. 1-2). The discovery of the Babylonian version of the Creation and Deluge traditions has put it beyond reasonable doubt that these are the original from which the Bible accounts have been derived."¹

" All these (as well as the story of the Tower of Babel) were originally genuine myth-stories of the gods ; and if they no longer deserve that appellation it is because the spirit of Hebrew monotheism has exorcised the polytheistic notions of deity, apart from which true mythology cannot survive."²

He says further : " the few passages where the old heathen conception of god-head still appears (I. 26 ; III. 22-24 ; VI. 1 ; XI. 1 *Genesis*) only serve to show how completely the religious beliefs of Israel have transformed and purified the crude speculations of pagan theology and adapted them to the ideas of an ethical monotheistic faith."³

¹ *Critical and Exegetical Commentary of Genesis* (Clark, 1910), p. ix.

² *Ibid.*, p. ix.

³ *Ibid.*, p. ix.

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The words italicised support the view upheld in this chapter, namely, that the *Genesis* stories are not original, but are improved versions of much more ancient traditions, which later writers were "inspired" to edit and rewrite. They are, as Dr. Skinner says : "*Babylonian myths naturalised in Israel.*"

CHAPTER FOUR

THE KEY TO THE MYSTERY

It will by now be evident that the originals of the Old Testament stories are much less history than mystery. The creation stories of *Genesis*, certainly, are symbolically written ; indeed, the *Genesis* story is rather a formula explaining creation generally than a historical account of the formation of our own little marble in God's Great Playground of Space. By analogy, of course, it may be read as a history of the creation of our own world, but it is equally the history of those which preceded it, and of that creation which, as astronomers well know, is continuous. Since the original writings are symbolical, there will inevitably be many meanings hidden within them, even though they are set down in the form of a story of creation and the history of " a chosen race."

This is the great difficulty in the way of all students of divinity, who have to wade through hundreds of commentaries, *opinions* of weight only according to the authority of the " divine " responsible. It is even worse

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for those who do not know the original writings and the keys to their unveiling, for they are thus confined to the study of a literal translation of a symbolical original. Herein lies the cause of most of the difficulties of students and teachers, for it is useless to study bare appearances, to weigh mere opinions ; that way lies agnosticism, or even atheism. It is the Inner Reality that alone will suffice.

There are other difficulties which confront the student, also almost insurmountable without the key. For instance, many of the words in the original scriptures are left untranslated, whilst many different words are translated by the same English term thus making " confusion worse confounded."

It is, therefore, necessary, before attempting a study of any part of the Old Testament, to comprehend how very difficult it is to understand the existing translations, even the Revised Version and those written in modern-style language. The latter may indeed be practical, but they are also extremely ugly. As regards its style and arrangement, there is no finer book in the world than the Old Testament, and to alter the version which is already accepted, even though it is not a correct translation, would not help matters. As it is now, it is a very beautiful

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thing, if only the method of writing be understood.

It would, of course, be easy, with Bishop Welldon, to put aside all that we do not comprehend, and attempt to publish an expurgated edition "with all the repugnant passages omitted"; but this would not help understanding: it would only show how squeamish and conventional even Church dignitaries may become in the face of public opinion, which is, after all, not often worth very much, being a mere conventional cry, easily awakened, though not easily laid to rest.

The Bishop candidly confesses (in a note to the writer) that he does not know much of the inner side of the Hebrew Scriptures and has no knowledge of Hebrew methods of studying them, and apparently does not see that his lack of knowledge may lead him to reject important and most valuable parts of the Bible. He, in fact, does what the so-called "higher critics" do, namely, rejects that which he does not understand or that which he deems repugnant. But it is not well to reject the Bible, either in part or as a whole: it is better to understand it, to know the methods of writing and the keys which will reveal the true, inner meaning.

It will be as well to turn to the report of the

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Bishop's sermon in Durham Cathedral in December, 1922, in which he enlarges on the matter. "I sometimes wish it were possible," he says, "to publish an expurgated Bible with certain passages that are repugnant to modern feeling omitted." He then refers to the length of the Bible, and declares that it is not all of equal value : indeed, that some parts of it are of little value, and suggests that Christians should concentrate their thought, not so much upon the Bible as a whole as upon the New Testament, and, especially, the Gospels. This is a very curious frame of mind for a Bishop belonging to a Church whose members have declared that the Bible is the handiwork of God Himself, written, indeed, by the finger of God, and, as such, beyond error !

Yet despite the many misunderstandings of the original Sacred Scriptures, on the part of both Eastern and Western translators, and of the many mistranslations of the original tongues in which they were written, the Divine Wisdom has ever been preserved within it, as a fossil is embedded in rock. Even in the incorrect translations, the Reality is concealed, and a Master Mind behind it all ; even where deliberate attempts to falsify and manipulate the original writings have been made, the WISDOM is plainly to be

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seen. The Intuition will discover it, a pure heart and mind and a determination to follow Truth will show the way, but it needs the mind which, like unto the geologist's hammer, can crush and clear away the surrounding mass of extraneous matter and reveal—REALITY.

There seems little doubt that the original compiler of this "Book of Ritual" was learned in the lore of the Egyptians and initiated into their most holy and sacred mysteries, and that he put the result of it into the scrolls from which the Pentateuch is derived. In it are found sentences written as words, and letters as words. It is truly a *Sepher* (book), or *Cipher*, which cannot be de-ciphered without a key; and, fortunately, the long-lost key which will unlock the doorway to the ancient science is now found.

"This Science," says Fabre D'Olivet, "Moses modified by a special inspiration and immured in *Bereshith* (*Genesis*), that is to say, in the first book of his *Sepher*, reserving the following four books to serve as a safeguard to the former."¹

D'Olivet seems unable to find words sufficiently expressive of his admiration for the author of this wonderful work.

"Offspring of the past," he exclaims, "and

¹ *La Langue Hebraïque Restituée*, p. 9, v. 2.

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teeming with the future, this book, heir to all the science of the Egyptians, carries still the germs of future sciences. Fruitage of a divine inspiration, it contains in its pages. . . all the secrets of Nature . . . and in *Bereshith* alone more than in all the books accumulated in the libraries of Europe."

Now, the fundamental key to the Scriptures *is contained in the sound of the names of the letters themselves*. Each man, each animal, each letter of a true, "holy" language, has a distinct note which to the ear of the intuitive, carries a deep and perfect meaning, and gives a key to the nature of that which sounds it forth.

The Secret Doctrine quotes P. Christian in this connection :

"The 'Army of the Voice' is a term closely connected with the mystery of Sound and Speech, as an effect and corollary of the Cause—Divine Thought. As beautifully expressed by P. Christian, the learned author of *Histoire de la Magie* and *L'Homme Rouge des Tuileries*, the words spoken by as well as the name of every individual largely determine his future fate. Why? Because :

"When our soul (mind) creates or evokes a thought, the representative sign of that thought is self-engraved upon the Astral fluid, which is the receptacle and, so to say, the mirror of all the manifestations of being.

"The sign expresses the thing : the thing is the (hidden or occult) virtue of the sign.

"To pronounce a word is to evoke a thought, and make it present : the magnetic potency of human speech is the commencement of every manifestation in the Occult World. To utter a Name is not only to define a Being (an Entity), but to place it under, and condemn it through the emission

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of the Word (*Verbum*) to the influence of one or more Occult potencies. Things are, for every one of us, that which it (the Word) makes them while naming them. The word (VERBUM) or speech of every man, is, quite unconsciously to himself, a *blessing* or a *curse*; this is why our present ignorance about the attributes and properties of the idea, as well as about the properties and attributes of matter, is often fatal to us.

“ Yes, names (and words) are either *beneficent* or *maleficent* : they are, in a certain sense, either venomous or health-giving, according to the hidden influences attached by Supreme Wisdom to their elements, that is to say, to the *letters* which compose them, and the *numbers* correlative to these letters.”

The key to *Genesis*, then, is discovered by means of a knowledge of the deep esoteric meaning, not only of the roots, but of the letters themselves. This method will be found to be both definite and certain in its results, and is the basis upon which the succeeding volumes of this work will be written. A description of this method of tracing the meaning of words in their roots and letters has already been given in the author's *Amen, the Key to the Universe*, but for the sake of convenience it is summarised here.

It is obvious that letters are symbols, literally *writings*, “ thrown together,” as the word implies, to express an idea or to picture certain sounds. A letter, generally, is given a name which, by its sound, expresses the idea underlying it. In modern language, however, this has been overlooked, with very

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disastrous results. Thus it is a well-known rule that, because a word sounds like another word, it is not necessarily from the same root, and by no means conveys the same meaning nor shows a derivation from the same source.

It is not difficult to understand the meaning of words, generally, but when it is a question of tracing them back to the original roots, it is certainly more of a problem. Even when, after much research, the actual roots are discovered and their origin known, the "authority" still eludes the seeker; for—and here is the problem—why should a root of two or three letters, a simple, single syllable, convey the accepted idea, *why*, in fact, *should words mean exactly what they do mean, and nothing else?*

The modern names of letters, such as *eigh* (*eh*), *bee*, *see*, etc., convey no meaning. Indeed, if one were asked: "What does *a* mean?" the answer would probably be: "It doesn't mean anything; it is just the first letter of the alphabet." If the questioner insisted further: "But what is the alphabet?" the reply would be: "Why, the ABC, of course." The ABC, however, is not the alphabet, for the word *alphabet* is made up of the first two Greek letters, *Alpha* and *Beta*, alone, whereas that which is termed the *alphabet* is the whole series of *writings*, i.e.,

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the letters, by which language is expressed as symbols.

The reason why modern names of letters, such as *eigh*, *bee*, *see*, etc., convey no meaning, is because they are merely derived, and therefore incomplete, names, whereas the Greek and Hebrew letters were named with complete names, names given according to the power or sound expressed by the letter. Thus, in Greek, the sound-power symbolised by the letter A, or *alpha*, was so named because it expressed a sound of *dominance*, of *leading*, a *power or direction*, the word *alpha* meaning *leader*, *that which takes precedence*, etc. In the Hebrew, the same letter was named *Aleph*, meaning *powerful*, *bull*, *great*, etc., or even a great number, *a thousand*.

If, therefore, letters are named by names expressing their sounds, the purpose and meaning of such names may reasonably be asked, since an understanding of them should provide a key to the meaning of the majority of roots in many different tongues.

In many languages, such as Hebrew and Chinese, the letters were originally pictures representing certain ideas and sounds ; these pictures being used as symbols to express the meaning of the sounds they represented. Thus the picture which has now become the modern *A* was the symbol of the powerful

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vowel-sound *ahhh*, or *a*, the most important of all sounds, and was written or carved as a Bull's head, the symbol of *causative power*. Moreover, in order to retain the idea even if the picture were altered, the name *Aleph*, also meaning *bull*, was given to it, so that the *idea* could never be lost, although the *picture* might be changed in form.

It is not known whether the Greek *Alpha*, or *A*, is directly derived from the Hebrew, but it is certain that the same idea is conveyed by the name, for this word, *Alpha*, especially expresses the idea of *power*, *leadership*, the *A* filling the whole mouth or going forth as a dominating sound. Thus it may well be deduced that *A* is the sound of *power*, of *active forth-going*, the first in creation as it is the first in letters—God's causative, creative Power. In like manner it is also the sound and symbol of anything causative, active, dominating, the inner reality of anything or anybody, the true Self, Man, in his body, or God in His Universe.

The letter *B* is likewise the sound symbol of that which is *internally developed*, not expressed or sent forth, unless a vowel sound is added, as in *Be*, *Ba*, *Bu*, etc. It is a sound indicating *internal activity*, a *development within an enclosed space*, generally the mouth, and hence it was well symbolised by the

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picture of a house, the letter *B* in Hebrew being written or carved as the picture of a house, and actually named *Beth*, which means, literally, *house*, that in which there is some kind of internal activity, and from which something or somebody may be expected to come forth.

The letter *G* (the modern *C*) was named *Camel*, or *Gimel*, and is the symbol of *hollowness*, the camel being supposed to have a hollow hump, and the sound itself being made in the hollow of the throat. It is also, as a sound, an expression of that which links and binds, or anything appertaining to bodily organism, things which are linked or joined together, according to Fabre D'Olivet ; hence the idea of its being called *camel* was perhaps that the camel was a link between towns divided by great deserts.

The letter *M* was named *water* (*Mem*), which, as the reader will know, is a symbol of *plasticity or extraction*, of *that from which all things come forth : matter, substance*. All, however, that remains of the Hebrew word *Mem* is the sound of the letter *M*, as in English.

U or *V*, the Hebrew *Vauv*, is also expressive of a link, but a link which joins separated or polarised opposites, bringing them into relation by sympathy rather than by actually

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binding them as with organisms. The word means literally *hook* or *link*, and so it is not difficult to realise the underlying idea.

All other letters were named in this manner, not only the Greek and Hebrew, but in other tongues also the same method has prevailed, certain sounds made naturally and spontaneously by man being expressed by letters and their names. But there are few students who have studied deeply this aspect of languages. Davies, however, in his *Celtic Researches*, shows it clearly of even modern letters, in Irish and English. He says : "*Certain actions will be found, of course, to generate spontaneously their corresponding articulations*" ; and illustrates this by describing how, when we push heavy bodies before us, make our way, or thrust ourselves forward, we naturally collect the air into the lungs as an internal support, and unconsciously endeavour to derive all possible aid from its elasticity by giving it the full range of the mouth ; the cheeks are inflated, lips pressed together with the intense compression of breath adapted with force, to express the articulation of *P* : and as often as breath escapes during the violence of such exertion, it will burst forth with no articulation but this.

Now, the Hebrew letter *P* is called *Pye*, or

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Pei, and means, literally, *mouth*. Even in modern language the letter *P* gives a picture of *I* (the *Ego*, or *Individual*) *going forth*, projecting Itself as *P*, thus becoming a symbol of the *Ego*, the "I" acting as Parent, Pater, or Father. In original languages, it is often found that the first letter of a root is, as it were, the governing letter, that which shows the main idea expressed in the word. Thus this letter *P*, symbol of *effort going forth*, or *giving forth*, *Paternity*, etc., is at the head of many words expressing these ideas, such as *Pater*, *parent*, *produce* (to lead forward), *protrude*, *push*, *plump*, etc.; and in other languages also, whether pronounced hard or soft (as *F* or *Ph*), it is the governing letter of various words, all expressing the same idea.

Davies gives many other explanations of the origin of the sounds which are expressed by letters, and offers strong proof that such articulate sounds are neither fanciful nor imitative, but "sounds naturally descriptive. They are produced unconsciously by the various impressions that are felt, and are calculated for communicating the same impressions to those who hear them. As they undoubtedly entered into the root of the *first language*, they retain their places, more or less, in the various dialects which have

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branched from this original stem.”¹

He says :

“ As the Hebrews were careful to distinguish this (*Aleph*) and other letters by names of known and definite import, it may be presumed that they were aware of some adequate reason for such an accurate distinction. The most obvious reason must be that, in the structure of language, the power of each letter was perceived to have a force, analogous to the *meaning* of the name assigned to it. We might, therefore, expect that *Aleph* had something of a positive, demonstrative, or intensive quality—that it *tended* and *directed* forwards, or enhanced the meaning of the powers with which it stood connected.”

This is a very important corroboration of the views set down here, and may be of assistance to those who need outside confirmation. The reader will be greatly helped, also, by pronouncing the various letters and meditating on the sounds produced. This is the method pursued by the writer and by George Russell (A. E.). To the intuitive reader, the result of such meditation carries its own conviction, the clear relationship of the name-sound to the underlying idea of each letter becoming abundantly evident.

“ I have no doubt,” says A.E., “ that in a remoter antiquity the roots of language were regarded as sacred, and when chanted every letter was supposed to stir into motion or evoke some subtle force in the body. Tone and word combined, we know, will thrill the nervous system, and this is especially so with lovers of music and persons whose virgin sensitiveness of feeling has never been blunted by excess. A word chanted or sung will start the wild fires leaping in the body, like

¹ *Celtic Researches*, p. 368.

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hounds which hear their master calling them by name, and to those whose aspiration heavenward has purified their being there comes at last a moment when, at the calling of the Ineffable Name, the Holy Breath rises as a flame and the shadow man goes forth to become one with the ancestral self. What is obvious in that ancient (Hindu) literature," he continues, "is the belief in a complete circle of correspondences between every root sound in the human voice and elements, forms and colours, and that the alphabet was sacred in character. Intuitions which modern psychologists regard as evidence of decadence are found present in the literature of antiquity. The attributions sometimes are the same as mine ; sometimes they differ, but they suggest the same theory of a harmony of microcosm with macrocosm, and it is carried out so that every centre in the body is named by the name of a divine power. It is only by a spiritual science we can recover identity, renew and make conscious these affinities."¹

Says Agrippa, guardedly, in his *Philosophy of Natural Magic*, (Chap. LXXIV) :

"Now if there be any language whose words have a natural signification, it is manifest that this is the Hebrew, the order of which he that shall profoundly and radically observe and shall know to resolve proportionably the letters thereof, shall have a rule exactly to find any idiom. There are, therefore, two-and-twenty letters *which are the foundation of the worlds and of creatures that are in it and are named in it*, and every saying and every creature are of them, and by their revolutions receive their name, being and virtue."

An illustration of this may be given. When blended, certain sounds make, as it were, the picture of an idea in the "mind's eye," or, better, in the mental atmosphere ; this picture is visualised by the Seer who is helping to form letters to represent sounds, and he *names* the vibratory picture according to the effect on his mind, and this name is then used to describe the object or idea, which it

¹ *Candle of Vision*, p. 133.

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thus truly represents. Thus the Hebrew word for pig, *chozzar*, symbolises certain powers of nature blended in the individual animal, for the letters of the word themselves represent these powers.

There is, for instance, in nature, a power of *effort*, the elementary *rooting* desire which keeps even the lowest being alive and existent, and this is expressed by a sound which represents such an idea, and symbolised by a letter which represents in turn the sound itself, the letter *ch*, pronounced in Hebrew as in the Scotch word *loch*, *i.e.*, as a guttural, the same as the Greek X. or Spanish X, as we have it in the title of the famous work, *Don Quixote*. This guttural is thus used to express the *low, elementary* nature of anything, and the proof that it actually does represent such can be gained by sounding the word which names the letter, *viz.*, *chess* or *cheth*, as a guttural sound: the effect of the sound upon the mind is to make clear the idea behind the sound, thus enabling one to "visualise" the idea it represents.

Another power in nature is symbolised by the letter Z, called in Hebrew, *Zawyin*, or *Zahyin*, which is written as a twisted nail or implement, and named *zawyin*, meaning *nail*, or *weapon*. The sound of this letter, as we find by repeatedly pronouncing it and

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considering its effect on the mind, is representative of a *twisting, rooting* force. The Hebrew letter *R*, called by the name *Reish*, which means *head* or *seat of intelligence*, is the symbol of *mind*, but the sound of the letter represents also *determined and directed motion or activity*, which is mind.

If, now, these three letters are joined together, they form the word *chozzar*, thus symbolising a *low elementary effort* (*ch*), *rooting, twisting and delving* (*z*), *crushing out or governing mind, or preventing the full development of mind* (*r*). As we have seen, the letters which rule a word are generally those which commence the root, and hence the letter which represents mind is last in this word, *chozzar*, which means, literally, *pig*. The three letters are, therefore, admirably and aptly chosen, and well define the nature of this particular animal.

Another illustration of the wonderful manner in which roots are built up is seen in the word *ChD*, which, in Hebrew, means *one*, or *apex*, and is sometimes written as *ACHd*, thus making the word more forceful by the addition of the symbol of *power*, *A*. As said above, the letter *ch* is a symbol of *effort*; this, added to the symbol of *division*, *D*, called in Hebrew *daleth*, forms the word *ChD*, the result of the combination of the letters representing two

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sounds, those of *effort and division*, the *ch*, symbol of *effort*, governing the *d*, symbol of *division*, i.e., *effort holds back division*. Hence the word *one* is rightly used to translate this word, the idea of *one* obviously being *division checked, division held back by effort*, and such is the idea of unity as seen in this root.

Now, if these letters be reversed so that *effort* is *conquered or governed by division*, if, that is, the *D* precedes the *Ch*, the word *DCh* arises, pronounced *dag* or *tag*, as in the German. According to the orthodox lexicons the Hebrew *DCh*, means, *to go forth* ; hence, on the authority of reason, one may say that the German *tag* and the British *day* are both derived from this root, for the day is the *going forth* of the sun, or was so considered in ancient times. It is curious to see how radically the position of the letters affects the meaning, for when the word is written *ChD*, it represents *effort holding back division*, but when it is written *DCh*, it symbolises *division governing effort* and gives rise to the idea of day, that which *makes a division* between light and darkness.

Such, then, very briefly explained, is the method which serves as a key to the Sacred Scriptures, an etymological and hieroglyphical key which will be used in this work in the endeavour to discover the fundamental

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truths of the Bible. In these pages, its application will, of necessity, be almost entirely confined to the interpretation of the Hebrew, additional explanations of it being given as the translation of the *Book of Genesis* proceeds. A fuller account of the origin of languages and letters, with a chapter devoted to each letter, is reserved for a later work, *The Origin of Language and Letters*.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANCIENT CREATION STORIES

Before attempting an explanation of the Creation story of *Genesis*, it will be useful to have an account of other ancient stories, to see where they differ and where they coincide.

"One of the most authentic accounts of creation may be found," says Cory in his *Fragments*, "in the remains of the Phœnician history of Sanchoniatho, who is considered to be the most ancient writer of the heathen world. It was translated into Greek by Philo Byblius and for the preservation of the fragment we are indebted to Eusebius."¹

Sanchoniatho supposed "that the beginning of all things was a dark and condensed windy air, or a breeze of thick air and a Chaos turbid and black as *Erebus* : and that these were unbounded and for a long series of ages destitute of form."

This is a literal translation, but it cannot be rendered more accurately. As is well known, Cory gives both the Greek and English text in all the fragments which he translated, thus making it possible to compare the two versions.

¹ *Ibid* (1832), p. vii.

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He says further that when this "wind" became enamoured of its own principles, the Chaos, "and an intimate union took place, that connection was called *Pothos* : and it was the beginning of the creation of all things . . . from its embrace with the wind was generated *Mot*, which some call *Ilus*, but others the putrification of a watery mixture. And from this sprang all the seed of the creation and the generation of the universe." This union, explains Cory, was symbolised among the heathens, and particularly among the Phœnicians, by an egg enfolded by a serpent, which *disjunctively* represented the Chaos and the Ether, but when *united*, the hermaphroditic first principle of the Universe, Cupid or *Porthos*.

It is interesting to note in this story that from this *Hyle* or *Mot*, the sun, the moon and the stars were eventually formed.¹ This gives an idea of some original root-substance, a plastic *Hyle* (literally, *mud*), from which all material things were fashioned.

Next it is said that the "wind," *i.e.*, of course, the Spirit, produced with his wife, *Baau* (*night*), two beings called *Aeon* and *Protogonus*. It is instructive to notice that whereas the Hebrew word, *Bohu*, or *BHU*, used in the Bible is generally translated *void*,

¹ *Fragments*, Cory, p. 4.

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in this story it is rendered *night*—a very significant term. But a full explanation of this, as of much else, is reserved for a later volume.

Cory next gives a description of the gradual development of man and the arts and crafts, curiously like that of the *Genesis* story, excepting only that the names of the men and women are generally in Greek and Latin. It appears that the translator changed the ancient names for others then well known to the Greeks, thereby making it almost impossible to understand the meaning of the original Phœnician names. One exception to be noted is that of *Sydyc*, "who was called the just," this name being obviously the Hebrew or Phœnician *Tzaddik* (*holy* or *just*). The name *Astarte* also remains; she is supposed to be the same as *Aphrodite*.

A similar story is told by Hesiod in his *Theogony*.¹

"From the beginning, say who first arose.
First Chaos was ; next ample bosom'd Earth,
The seat immovable for evermore
Of those immortals, who the snow-top'd heights
Inhabit of Olympus
From Chaos, Erebus and ebon Night :
From Night the Day sprang forth and shining Air,
Whom to the love of Erebus she gave.
Earth first produced the Heaven ;
. . . . Then, with Heaven
Consorting, Ocean from her bosom burst
With its deep-eddyding waters."

Trans., Elton.

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The poem then goes on to tell of the birth of the gods and Titans, of the struggles to create, of the wars of the gods, the birth of demigods and other beings.

The next fragment of history recorded is by Berossus, and this also is translated by Cory. Berossus, who was for some years at Athens and was a priest of Belus, was a Babylonian by birth, and lived in the reign of Alexander the Great. He appears to have sketched his history of creation, says Cory, from the temple wall pictures, but this is unlikely, for as a priest he would naturally have access to the manuscripts then in existence. His history was preserved by Alexander Polyhistor, and repeated in a fashion by Eusebius.

Berossus himself states that there were written accounts preserved at Babylon with great care, and that these writings, which covered an almost incredible period, contained a history of the heaven, of the sea, and of the birth of mankind, etc. The inhabitants of the world, at that early period, he says, lived in a lawless manner, and a Law-giver was sent to instruct them. This Law-giver is mystically described as having a body part fish and part man, and a representation of him is preserved "to this day." He taught men letters, and the arts and sciences of every kind, and lived among them

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as a human being, which of course he could not have done had he had the tail of a fish instead of the legs of a man. He taught them to construct cities, to build temples, to compile laws, and explained to them the principles of geometrical knowledge. When the "sun had set," this amphibious being, who was called *Oannes*, retired again into the sea.

Berossus wrote concerning the generation of man somewhat as follows : There was a time when there existed nothing but darkness and an abyss of waters in which there were all kinds of undeveloped and unevolved creatures. Over all this the Sea presided, symbolised as a female named *Omoroöa*. Later, *Belus*, who is the equivalent of *Jupiter*, came and divided this sea, or darkness, and formed from one-half the earth, and from the other the heavens ; he destroyed all the unformed animals, reduced the universe to order, created man, the stars, the sun, the moon and the planets—that is, made a cosmos from a chaos.

Berossus does not, with most scripture writers, leave his readers to imagine that this is literal history, but says plainly that it is an allegorical description of the beginning of things. Most of his writings are unfortunately lost ; had this not been so, further comparison

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could doubtless have been made with the *Genesis* stories, and helped towards the solution of the question as to whether these were copies of the Babylonian tales, as they undoubtedly seem to be. Berossus narrates also a Flood story which certainly appears to be the original from which Ezra or some other scribe copied whilst in Babylon.¹

The Creation stories of China are interesting on account of their deeply philosophical basis and, in many cases, the absence of the usual exaggerated legendary element. They may be studied in the wonderful series of *The Sacred Books of the East*, edited by the great Sanskritist, Max Muller. The *Li Ki*, translated by Legge,² says that "man is the product of the qualities (attributes) of Heaven and Earth by the interaction of the dual power of nature, the union of the animal and intelligent (souls) and the finest subtile matter of the elements." This, however, does not appear to be a perfect translation, for the writer adds a footnote in which, quoting the editors of another Chinese Scripture, he says that "the characteristic attributes of Heaven and Earth are blended and hid in the two forces of nature. . . . If we speak of these forces in their fundamental character,

¹ See Cory's *Ancient Fragments* (1832), pp. 22-5.

² *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. XXVII., p. 381.

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we call them YIN and YANG. If we speak of them as they develop their power we call them KWEI and SHAN. If we speak of them as they become substantial we call them the five elements." These two forces of Nature, the *Yin* and the *Yang*, are considered by the Chinese philosophers to be the root and cause of all things.

In the beginning, says the *Li Ki*, "there was the Grand Unity (*Thai Ye*) which separated and became heaven and earth (*i.e.*, spirit and substance). It revolved and became the dual force in nature."¹ This teaching is the same as that of the Hebrew Qabalist, the Hindu, the Egyptian, and many other religions.

Apparently the Chinese philosophy accepted the idea of the creation of the world by means of sound vibrations, for we find it is said that "music appeared in the grand beginning of all things," and that through the interaction of the produced "pairs of opposites" all things have since appeared.

This is also the idea expressed in the *Tao Teh King* of China.² The TAO is the One Divine Reality from which are emanated the polarised opposites called (in English) Heaven and Earth. "In the grand beginning of

¹ *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. XXVII., pp. 386-7.

² *Ibid.*, vol. XXIX., p. 19 *et seq.*

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things there was nothing in all the vacancy of space ;¹ there was nothing that can be named." Under the guidance of the One Reality, the Tao, the polarisation of this "nothing that can be named" took place, and there proceeded an "evolution and not a creation." How it arose that God caused this to appear in Space is a question which the Chinese philosopher does not answer ; but he accepts the idea, as does the translator, "not attempting to explain it, the one mystery, the sole mystery of the Universe." This idea is also found throughout "*The Secret Doctrine*" and in many ancient teachings.

In the Hindu accounts of Creation, some of which are highly philosophical, creation does not occur until *Mahat* (*Cosmic Intelligence*) is produced. It is this principle (*Mahat*) which gives individuality to all things and all beings, which alone makes a finite creation possible, which lends, as it were, a kind of self-consciousness to creation, as the Commentary of Telang on the *Anugita* notes.² In the *Anugita* story of creation, as in the Chinese, five elements are born from the operation of *Mahat*, but this is termed the second creation, for previously there was only the SELF-Existent *Vishnu*, otherwise the

¹ Other writers say there was nothing cognisable, which is more correct.

² *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. VIII., *Anugita*, xxvi.

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Great SELF, the pure SPIRIT or *Purusha*. Here, as in the *Genesis* story, is an account of a dual creation.

In the sacred scriptures of the Hindus, the *Upanishads*,¹ the same idea is set forth : All things come from SAT, the One Reality, the same as the Chinese TAO, that which is One "without a second" (as is said in the Hebrew prayer, *Yigdol*, one of the most beautiful of metrical writings). From this *Sat*, the unrealisable, "that which is, was born. It thought (meditated) 'May I be many, may I grow forth'," and the elements were then produced from the root of all, the subtle essence which is in the nature of the Self-Existent. Of this it is said : "the SELF, the Infinite, is everywhere and in all things," one before creation, but appearing as many afterwards. This is the same idea as the Christian Immanence and Transcendence of God.

This "subtile essence" was non-apparent in the beginning. "It became existent, it grew. It turned into an egg" (that is, the original root-substance took upon itself an ovoid form, a *nebula*), and after a period of incubation it broke open and showed two halves, one of silver and the other of gold. From these opposites was generated the universe.²

¹ *Khandogya Upanishad*, Part I., p. 93. (*Sacred Books of the East*.)

² *Khandogya Upanishad*, Part I., p. 55.

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In the beginning, then, there was nothing save an ocean of ether, an ocean in Space, in which the Cosmic Egg developed, and in which, eventually, God arose, manifesting as the Creative Powers, the *Prajapati*, The Former and Fabricator of the worlds. He produced the angelic beings (*Devas* or *shining ones*) by His breath, and then appeared "daylight."¹ His breathing next generated, or caused to emanate, lesser beings, thereby causing "darkness." He made all things in His own image, literally "created a counterpart of Himself."² By brooding over (*tap*) the waters of space He caused to come forth other great *Prajapati* who were associated with Him in the work of creation.³

Another and perhaps even more philosophical explanation is given in the famous *Bhagavata Purana*. *Brahma*, wishing to become known, and desirous of producing a finite series of worlds within the Infinite, defined certain boundaries in space, or inflicted upon the ultimate essence of space a certain measure of His Power or Will, thus making the Root-Substance of the Universe subject to Time (*Kala*) and Necessity, and bringing it under the sway of Law (*Karma*).

¹ Here is evidently a play upon the words *Diva* (*shining one*) and *Diva* (*daylight*).

² *Satapatha Brahmana*, p. 12-4, vol. XLIV. *Sacred Books of the East*.

³ P. 238, vol. 1. *Sacred Books of the East*.

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Next followed the development of this Root-Substance (*Svabhavat*), different grades of matter, or qualities, thus being produced. *Brahma* then manifested as Mind, as an Individual Creator, and the sense of " I-ness " (*Ahankara*) arose. The production of the elements proceeded and He permeated all things with His Life, forming the Cosmic Egg, or sphere of Creative Activity. *Brahma* is the Three-in-One Creator, Preserver and Regenerator (Destroyer) of the Universe.

Creation, according to this account, is in two stages : first, the Principles of things are produced, and this is called the Causal Creation, or Crown of things (*Karana*) ; next comes the actual creation or, as it is called, the resultant or *Karya* creation, Matter being set in active transformation as the life of God becomes manifest therein.

Before Creation, *Brahma* conceived it " in principle," thought it all out ere it was produced as fact ; in the words of the scripture " He meditated " for many hundred years before commencing to create. He then " dried up the waters " (of space) and proceeded to bring into manifestation the Ideal Creation He had thus planned. (Here again is seen the idea of a dual creation, the first being ideal, the second actual).¹

¹ See *A Study of the Bhagavata Purana*, by P. N. Sinha, M.A., p. 12-24.

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The *Mundaka-Upanishad* also states that creation began after *Brahma* had expanded Himself by meditation or brooding (*Tapas*).¹ The "Great waters were outspread everywhere and within them was the germ of all things." In the same writing there is an account of the coming forth of all beings like sparks from a Blazing Fire, from the Imperishable One Reality who emanates all things.

The *Taittiriya-Upanishad* also says : " He wished, ' May I become many, may I grow forth ' " : He then brooded over Himself and sent forth all things as ideas, entering into, or ensouling, them.

The *Sathapatha-Brahmana* says : " verily in the beginning this (the Universe) was water, nothing but a sea of water : " these waters interacted and produced the Cosmic Egg from which the worlds were generated after the Creator had arisen.

All these accounts may be compared with the Hebrew and other versions. The separation of the Egg into two parts is equivalent to the creation of " Heaven and Earth," the generation of light and darkness, and the two creation stories which are found in *Genesis*. The waters of Space are also found in *Genesis* and are there called *Shamayem*, meaning,

¹ Vol. XXXII., I., 8. *Sacred Books of the East*.

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literally, *the High waters*, but usually translated *the Heavens above*. The idea of *Brahma* creating a counterpart of Himself and co-operating with the *Prajapati*, is also found in the same book, where the Creative Powers called *Elohim* (a plural word signifying *collectivity of Creative Power*) say : "let us make man in our own image." In *Genesis*, too, is noted the idea of the drying up of the waters of Space, in the separation of the waters from the waters. Further comparisons may be noted in the Hebrew tradition of the Cosmic Adam (*Qadmon*) separating from his formative principle, Eve, in order to produce the Universe. In this sense, the Garden of Eden and the Egg of *Brahma* are the same. The Chinese story illustrates a similar idea, and it is also found throughout *The Secret Doctrine*.

The conception of God creating by His Word ("and God said") appears also in the Hindu *Maitrayana-Brahmana Upanishad*.¹ "This world was unuttered ;"² afterwards, *Prajapati*, having meditated, uttered it in the words : *Bhuh*, *Bhuvah*, and *Swar* (i.e., the three worlds were manifested).

In many Scriptures is seen the idea of the production of a form which is inanimate and

¹ Vol. I., 6., *Sacred Books of the East*.

² Compare Babylonian story : "When in the height Heaven was not named." See Vol. II.

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into which the Soul or Vital Air is then breathed. "In the beginning," says the *Maitrayana-Brahmana*,¹ "*Prajapati* stood alone. . . . Meditating on Himself, he created many creatures . . . without understanding and lifeless. . . . He thought, 'I shall enter within that they may awake.' Making Himself like air (*Vayu*) he entered in the forms Dividing Himself as the fivefold breath." This is also found in the *Genesis* version, in the Arabian traditions, and in the Mexican and other stories.

Orpheus, so Appion states, likened Chaos to an egg, "in which was the confused mixture of the primordial elements. This chaos, which Orpheus calls an egg, is taken for granted by Hesiod, having a beginning, produced from infinite matter, and originated in the following way."² He then describes how primordial matter, becoming fourfold, generated the egg from itself, which, being impregnated with the Divine Spark, became the Manifested Cosmos of ovoid form.

"The Egg," says Kenealy, "was carried in procession at the celebration of the Mysteries, because, as Plutarch says (like the Pomegranate), it was the material of generation, containing the seeds and germs of life and motion without being actually possessed of either. For this reason it was a very proper symbol of Chaos, containing the seeds and materials of all things, which, however, were barren and useless until the Creator fructified them by the incubation of His Vital

¹ Vol. XV., p. 292, *Sacred Books of the East*.

² *Clementine Homilies*, III. & IV. *Ante-Nicene Library*.

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Spirit, and released them from the restraints of inert matter by the efforts of his divine strength. The incubation of the Vital Spirit is represented on the colonial medals of Tyre by a Serpent wreathed round an Egg, for the Serpent having the power of casting his skin, and apparently renewing his youth, became the symbol of life and vigour, and as such is always made an attendant on the mythological Deities presiding over health. . . . The Creator, delivering the fructified seeds of things from the restraints of inert matter by his divine strength, is represented on innumerable Greek medals by the Urus, or Wild Bull, in the act of butting against the Egg of Chaos and breaking it with his horns; or in other words, God conjoining himself to the Spirit."¹

This idea of a Primordial Chaos or Virgin Mother of the Worlds is most beautifully told in the famous *Kalevala* of ancient Finland, which has been rightly placed by Max Muller on a level with the greatest epics of the world.² It is undoubtedly of great age and existed prior to the introduction of Christianity, the doctrines contained in it being themselves much more ancient.

"*The Kalevala*," says Crawford, "dates back to an enormous antiquity. One reason for believing this lies in the silence of the *Kalevala* about Russians, Germans or Swedes, their neighbours. This shows that the poem must have been composed at a time when these nations had but very little or no intercourse with the Finns. The coincidence between the incantations adduced, proves that these witch-songs date from a time when

¹ *Introduction to the Apocalypse*, p. 351.

² *The Kalevala*, trans. J. M. Crawford, p. xxxix.

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the Hungarians and Finns were still united as one people ; in other words, at a time at least 3,000 years ago. The whole poem betrays no important signs of foreign influence and in its entire tenor is a thoroughly pagan epic. There are excellent reasons for believing that the story of Mariatta, recited in the 15th Rune, is an ante-Christian legend.”¹

This view of its antiquity is supported by many writers. The creation stories of the Epic are interesting to comparative religionists, and seem to be akin to, if not derived from, ancient Hindu stories.

“ The Finns proper regard the chief heroes . . . as descendants of the Celestial Virgin, *Ilmatar*, impregnated by the winds when *Ilma* (*air, wind, breath or spirit*), Light, and Water were the only material existences.”²

All this is akin not only to the Hindu account, but to the Hebrew as well. The Bible shows, as already stated, that in the beginning were the “ uplifted waters ” (*Sha-mayim*) or “ heavens above,” a *virgin* sea or flux of cosmic substance, the Mother(-stuff) or Matrix of all created things, over which the Spirit of God brooded to make manifest the Creation.³ Whether it is called the Spirit of

¹ *Ibid.*, p. xlv-v.

² *Ibid.*, p. xxxii.

³ This will be fully explained in Vol. iii. of this work.

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God, or *Ilma*, as with the Finns, the concept is the same. The idea, moreover, that Spirit (*Ilma*), Water (*Sha-mayim* of the Hebrew story), and Light, were the first in Creation is the same as that of the Bible, though the differences in the stories show clearly that there were no "Christianising" influences at work in the Finnish Epic.

In the first Rune the story of the Virgin Mother of Space is told :

" In primeval times a maiden,
Beauteous daughter of the ether,
Passed for ages her existence
In the great expanse of Heaven,
O'er the prairies yet unfolded.
Wearisome the maiden growing,
Her existence sad and hopeless,
Thus alone to live for ages
In the infinite expanses
Of the air above the sea-foam,
In the far outstretching spaces,
In a solitude of ether,
She descended to the ocean."¹

After being tossed about for some time, *Ilmatar* travailed for seven hundred years ere " her first-born was delivered." Previous to this, a Bird lays its eggs upon the knees of the " Water-Mother," but she shakes the nest and the eggs fall into the primeval ocean and are dashed to pieces, all the fragments, however, coming together in a wonderful manner, from their conjunction being formed Heaven and Earth, as in the Hindu and

¹ *The Kalevala*, trans. J. M. Crawford, p. 5.

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Egyptian stories. The difference is that, in the Finnish version, there are six eggs of gold and one of iron, whereas in the Hindu account there is but one egg of Gold and Silver, which divides in order that creation may proceed.

The Virgin Mother, however, continues to swim in the Ocean and "begins at last her workings"; then the earth or dry land appeared as "her hand turned in the waters," and "the level banks arose." At length the Great Hero, "*Wainamoinen (the wonderful enchanter)*", was delivered from his Mother, *Ilmatar*, the Ether's daughter."¹

The story of Creation as told by the ancient Zoroastrian writers, makes *Ahriman* the Opposer of God, the Evil Spirit, who wars with *Mazda*, apparently with *Mazda's* own permission. This Evil One, like all the opposers in the different stories, swears he will have nothing to do with man and will never assist in such a creation, the result being that he himself is cast into darkness with all his demons.²

In the Zoroastrian story, the first produced of God's creation was *Vohuman*, or *good thought*, as in the Hindu version; the actual creation followed, the first thing produced

¹ *Ibid*, Rune I.

² *Bundahis, Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. V., p 6.

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being the sky (more correctly, the *Aether*, though the translator has not noticed this); the second, water; the third, earth; the fourth, plants; the fifth, animals; and lastly, mankind, the creation of the sixth epoch, as in the Hebrew account. A similar description of the production of the "great luminaries" is also given in this version, but there are more details than in the Bible story.¹

The Evil One determined, it is said, to destroy man, and was helped in this evil design, not by the first woman as in the Bible, but by a female demon of a very determined and atrocious character. *Ahriman*, we are told, had the form of a log-like Lizard, which is a variant of the Snake; it is also said that he fell from the sky like a snake.²

Gayomard, as far as can be understood, seems to have been the first man, but he is apparently destroyed by the machinations of *Ahriman*. Before his death, however, there is a curious creation of man from this progenitor of the race; he was caused by God to break out in a sweat, and from the drops of this was formed a beautiful youth. Gayomard passed away "to the left hand," but his seed was thoroughly purified by the sun, and forty years afterwards the first parents grew up from the earth as haermaphrodite, joined

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10-12.

² *Ibid.*, p. 16-17.

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together so that it was not clear which was male and which was female. (This is, of course, also implied in the *Genesis* story, for from Adam sprang two beings, both male and female).

The idea of the Zoroastrians that a beautiful youth was produced from drops of sweat, is not so strange when clearly understood, for whether the egg is extruded from the body, having the appearance of a huge excrescence, or held within the body, makes little difference. The conception is also found in the account of creation given in *The Secret Doctrine*, where it is stated that one of the very early races of mankind propagated by a kind of budding or exudation, a phenomenon graphically described by the ancient writer as "sweat drops." All this, however, is a matter for the physiologist.

The two first parents in the Zoroastrian story were called *Matri* and *Matroyao*, or, in a later part of the work *Bundahis* (*Creation*), *Mashya* and *Mashyoi*, names curiously like the Hebrew *Aish* and *Aisha*. The writer says that there was breathed into their bodies the soul (*nisme* ; Heb : *Neshamah*) which pre-existed, the body being merely the base of operations, as in the Hebrew. These two, like other first parents, were corrupted by Evil Spirits, but later the desire for each

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other again arose, and offspring was produced. (Previously, as in the Garden of Eden, there was "no marrying or giving in marriage," for Adam "knew his wife" after the "fall"). Seven pairs were born from the first Zoroastrian pair, and the "constant continuance of the generation of the world arose."¹

Whilst the Bible speaks of two original human beings from whom all are descended, these and other traditions mention seven great ancestors of the different races of men, and this, considering the great differences in type of the many peoples of the earth, certainly seems more probable.

The traditional histories of ancient Mexico and Peru speak of the peopling of the South American states by seven *Grand Originals*, Sahagun, the early Spanish historian, quoted by the Abbé De Bourbourg in his *Popul Vuh*, says that these seven came out from seven caves ; he understands this to mean that they came in seven boats, but the idea is not very reasonable.

The Secret Doctrine of H. P. Blavatsky, quoting from the ancient Hindu doctrines, says that there were seven different human groups evolved on seven different portions of the globe. The ancient book from which

¹ *Bundahis, Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. V., p. 58.

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the author quotes states : " The Great Chohans called the Lords of the Moon, of the airy (*ethereal*) bodies : ' Bring forth men, men of your nature ' . . . They went, each to his allotted land ; seven of them, each on his lot." ¹

The same idea of seven originals is mentioned in *The Chaldean Account of Creation*, where seven kings, all brothers, grew up and replenished the earth. In the Hebrew *Sepher Dtzeniouta* of the *Zohar*, there is a vague description of seven Kings who perished before the balance was adjusted, *i.e.*, as H. P. Blavatsky says, before the sexes had separated.² A further creation then followed and a new race was born.

Hermes, in *Pymander*, also speaks of seven ancestors. Pindar, in the *Philosophumena*³, likewise relates a story of the seven primitive men born from the bosom of the earth (*autochtones*) ; and the same idea is echoed in Greek and South American stories. Hesiod (about 900 B.C.) speaks of a kind of Garden of Eden on earth in the beginning, a golden age, followed by a " fall."

" When gods alike and mortals rose to birth,
Th' immortals form'd a golden race on earth
Of many-linguaged men ; they lived of old

¹ *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd ed., Vol. II., p. 18.

² De Pauly's translation does not mention Seven Kings, but merely " Kings who perished."

³ *Ibid*, Miller's ed. : v. 7.

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When Saturn reigned in Heaven ; an age of gold.
Like gods they lived, with calm, untroubled mind,
Free from the toil and anguish of our kind ;
Nor e'er decrepid age mis-shaped their frame,
The hand's, the foot's proportion still the same.

Death as a slumber pressed their eyelids down.

The gods then formed a second race of man,
Degenerate far, and silver years began ;
Unlike the mortals of a golden kind,
Unlike in frame of limbs, and mould of mind . . .
Their frantic follies wrought them pain and woe ;
Nor mutual outrage would their hands forego,
Nor would they serve the gods, nor altars raise
That in just cities shed their holy blaze.
Them angry Jove engulf'd, who dar'd refuse
The gods their glory and their sacred dues. . . .
The sire of Heaven created then
A race, the third of many-languaged men,
Unlike the silver they ; of brazen mould,
Strong with the ashen spear, and fierce and bold ;
Their thoughts were bent on violence alone. . . .
Them (the third race) when the abyss had covered from
the skies,
Lo ! the fourth age on nurt'ring earth arise ;
Jove form'd the race a better, juster line ;
A race of heroes, and of stamp divine ;
Lights of the age that rose before our own ;
As demigods o'er earth's wide regions known."¹

The poet goes on to describe the advent of the "iron age," the present race, and all its difficulties, and bemoans his fate at having been born at such a time. This idea of four ages or creations is also found in the Hindu and South American stories.

Probably the most important account of Creation is that given, in veiled language, in

¹ *Works and Days*, trans., Elton.

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the *Book of Dzyan* from which Madame Blavatsky compiled her famous *Secret Doctrine*, a marvellous work of over 2,500 pages.

Madame Blavatsky translates this most ancient writing, and comments voluminously upon it, having seen a copy of it whilst, apparently, on her journeys to Thibet. "An archaic manuscript," she calls it, "a collection of palm leaves made impermeable to water, fire, and air, by some specific and unknown process." She describes the account of creation given therein, which is, in many ways, the same as that of the ancient Hindu, though infinitely more clear. Her great work shows the gradual development of Cosmos, the primordial creation of the heavens, the slow awakening of the Cosmos from its sleep.

The first beginning is the "point in the Mundane Egg," from which all things spring, "the germ which is latent and active periodically and by turns." All things have their rise within the ever unknowable Abstract Space, the All-inclusive Reality. In the Divine Thought which emanates therefrom lies "concealed the plan of every future cosmogony and theogony."¹

There is, according to this authority, a One Life, eternal, invisible, yet omnipresent,

¹ *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd. ed., vol. I., p. 31.

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“ without beginning or end, yet periodical in its manifestations—between which periods reigns the dark mystery of Non-Being ; unconscious, yet absolute consciousness, unrealisable, yet the one self-existent Reality ; truly ‘ a Chaos to the senses, a Kosmos to the reason.’ Its one absolute aspect, which is Itself, eternal ceaseless motion, is called, in esoteric parlance, *the Great Breath*, which is the perpetual motion of the Universe, in the sense of limitless, ever-present Space. That which is motionless cannot be Divine. But then there is nothing motionless within the Universal Soul.”¹

“ The Secret Doctrine affirms the Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane ; periodically the playground of numberless universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing, called the manifesting stars, and the Sparks of Eternity. The appearance and disappearance of Worlds is like a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux.”²

The mystery of creation is fully dealt with in this great work, and a commentary upon the different stanzas of the *Book of Dzyan* is given. These stanzas, H. P. Blavatsky explains, present an “ abstract formula which can be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to all evolution ; to that of our tiny earth, to that of the chains of planets of which the earth forms one, to the Solar Universe to which

¹ *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd ed., vol. I., p. 32.

² *Ibid*, p. 45.

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the chain belongs, and so on, in an ascending scale, till the mind reels and is exhausted with the effort.

“ They refer to the seven great stages of the evolutionary process which are spoken of in the Hindu *Puranas* as the ‘ seven creations ’ and in the Bible as the ‘ Days ’ of creation.

“ *Stanza one* describes the state of the ONE ALL, during *Pralaya* (the rest of Nature), before the first flutter of re-awakening Manifestation. . . .

“ *Stanza two* describes a state which, to a western mind, is so nearly identical with that mentioned in *Stanza one*, that to express the idea of its difference would require a treatise in itself. . . .

“ *Stanza three* describes the reawakening of the Universe to life after *Pralaya*. It depicts the emergence of the Monads (the unclothed souls in their Garden of Eden) from their state of absorption within the One (God), the earliest and highest stage in the formation of worlds, the term Monad being one which may apply equally to the vastest Solar System or the tiniest atom (and likewise to the Reality or Spirit within the body of Man).

“ *Stanza four* shows the differentiation of the ‘ Germ ’ of the Universe into the septenary Hierarchy of conscious Divine Powers, which are the active manifestations of the One Supreme Energy. They are the framers, the shapers, and ultimately the creators (builders) of all the manifested Universe, in the only sense in which the name ‘ creator ’ is intelligible ; they inform and guide it ; they are the only intelligent Beings who adjust and control evolution, embodying in themselves those manifestations of the One Law, which we know as the ‘ Laws of Nature ’ . . . This stage of evolution is spoken of in Hindu mythology as the ‘ Creation of the Gods.’ ”

(All this is echoed in the ancient myths of Greece and Rome, of Egypt, and of ancient America.)

“ *Stanza five* describes the process of world-formation. First, diffused Cosmic Matter, then the ‘ fiery whirlwind,’ the first stage in the formation of a nebula. This nebula condenses, and after passing through various transformations, forms a

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Solar Universe, a Planetary Chain, or a single Planet, as the case may be.

"*Stanza six* indicates the subsequent stages in the formation of a 'world' and brings the evolution of such a world down to its fourth great period, corresponding to the period in which we are now living.

"*Stanza seven* continues the history, tracing the descent of life down to the appearance of Man; and thus closes the First Book of the Secret Doctrine."¹

The second volume of this remarkable work, ignored by scientists generally, though itself containing all the seeds of future sciences, describes the whole of the evolutionary process which makes of non-conscious man a highly-evolved, intellectual being, who, as he slowly develops throughout the course of ages, will become first a superman, and eventually a demigod.

"It teaches (a) the simultaneous evolution of seven human Groups on seven different portions of our globe; (b) the birth of the etheric form² before the denser physical, the former being a model for the latter, and (c) that man in this Round (of evolution), preceded every mammalian—the anthropoids included—in the animal kingdom."

These seven human groups develop on different continents, the first of which, existing millenia ago, is called by the writer, "The Imperishable Sacred Land. The second is termed the Hyperborean Land, the second

¹ *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd ed., vol. I., pp. 48-49.

² The mould around which the body is built.

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continent which stretched out its promontories southward and westward from the North Pole to receive the second race of man, and comprised what is now known as Northern Asia. . . . It was a real continent, a *bona fide* land, which knew no winter in those days." The third continent, on which the third race developed, she calls Lemuria, following the nomenclature of P. L. Sclater, who, between 1850 and 1860, asserted on zoological grounds the actual existence, in prehistoric times, of a Continent which he proved to have extended from Madagascar to Ceylon and Sumatra. It included some portions of what is now Africa, and stretched from the Indian Ocean to Australia, but otherwise has now wholly disappeared beneath the waters of the Pacific, leaving here and there, as islands, some of its highest peaks. The fourth continent is Atlantis, made famous by Plato, on which the fourth race developed and fell. Europe is part of the fifth great Continent, and on it, the fifth race, is now evolving, to produce, in turn, a new race.

Thus, according to these teachings, there are seven races, and seven great Continents over which they rule. After the seventh will follow *Pralaya*, the *Rest* of the world, wherein

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all will return to the primordial state of bliss.¹

All the ideas dealt with in *The Secret Doctrine* can be traced, though sometimes only with difficulty, in the many sacred books of the Hindus and the Zoroastrians, as well as in the Egyptian and ancient American legends. It will be shown, moreover, in the later volumes of this work, that they are also deeply hidden in the Hebrew-Christian stories of creation as laid down in the *Book of Genesis*.

The famous Book of the *Zohar*, the mystical and esoteric work of the origin of which no one is sure, and which was translated completely only by Jean De Pauly into French and published posthumously in 1906, makes many mysterious allusions to creation very similar to those given already ; indeed, one portion of the work is called the *Book of Dzenioutha*, a title which is curiously like that of the *Book of Dzryan* from which H. P. Blavatsky quotes : she says, in fact, that both drew from a common source.

In this *Book of Dzenioutha*, it is said that all ideas of the things to be made, were in the mind of God before creation, just as in the Hindu account it is said that God thought out His creation before making it manifest. Even the Great Patriarchs were in the thought

¹ *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd ed., vol. II., pp. 6-7.

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of God before creation.¹ We are told also that there is a secret which was before creation, but De Pauly confuses this idea by "adding words to make sense," which, unfortunately, make nothing but the opposite.

In the beginning, says the *Zohar*, God produced a point which became the Divine Thought; in this, He devised all things which were to be, and sent forth from it all the ideas which were later to be clothed in matter and become forms. This, again, shows two creations, the first in Idea, the second in Form. In a later portion of the book, it is said that God formed for Himself a kind of Palace in which was contained the seeds of all things destined to exist, and this Palace, curiously enough, is called *Elohim*, the plural name which is usually translated by the singular *God*. This suggests that the Creative Powers, the *Elohim*, were emanated by the thought of God for the purpose of building up His ideal creation into form, for, before creation, the two, the Absolute and the Manifested God, the MI and the ALH, were one.² (This idea is also mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine*). Hence, the *Zohar* says, there are two beginnings involved, two beginnings united together.³ A play upon

¹ *Zohar*, i., 1b.

² *Ibid.*, i., 15a.

³ *Ibid.*, i. 7b.

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words also shows that in the beginning God created the Six Powers, making with them Himself the Primordial Seven.¹

After the planning of the work and the thinking out of the creation, God "knocked upon the void," that is, He disturbed the equilibrium of the Primordial Substance from which He produced the differentiated matter.² He disturbed the balance of this Substance, which otherwise would have remained uncreate, as will be explained in Vol. III, when the Old Testament story is considered. The sound of this knock, or as De Pauly adds, the sound of the *Word* (which is not in the original Hebrew), was the commencement of all creation. The *Memrah* is mentioned later as being the manifestation of God as Sound, and this De Pauly translates *Word*, to make the dogma of Christianity fit into the ancient Hebrew teaching, though it is not found there except in interpolations.

Having caused the development of Sound by which creation commenced, God polarised the "waters" of Space, the Substance in and from which He intended to create the necessary forms, and having separated the waters from the waters, He made an alliance between them, thus developing different

¹ Instead of reading the word BRASHITH literally, i.e., in the beginning the Rabbis read it as BRA SHITH, he has created six.

² *Zohar*, i., 15a.

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kinds of matter. The *Zohar* describes this mystically as a linking by God of the male with the female; that is, to use Hindu terms, He linked the *Rajasic* (active) matter to the *Tamasic* (resistant) by means of the *Sattvic* or balanced quality, thus producing the three primordial states of matter in which all things have their origin as forms. The full explanation of this idea will have its place in a later volume.

This Supreme (Point), then, caused matter to assume different qualities, one quality serving as clothing for another, thus producing, by reason of these different degrees, what the Theosophist calls the different "planes," or states, of matter. "The Supreme Point radiated a Light so subtle that it entered into all things which were produced,"¹ thus generating the layers of heaven. Such is the Qabalistic idea of creation.

In a very curious 15th century work, the *Rausat-Us-Safa* (*Garden of Purity*), there are many strange stories told of creation and the flood which appear to fill in the gaps left in the Hebrew narratives, though they certainly do not improve on the original and are apparently inventions of the Arabian commentators.

¹ *Zohar*, i., 19b.

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When God decided to create Adam, it is said in this work, He called the angel Gabriel to Him and told him to bring a handful of loam of various colours and of different qualities from the surface of the earth. The Spirit of the Earth was evidently annoyed at the idea of man being created, and disliked parting with His substance for such a purpose ; other angels had, therefore, to be sent to argue the point, and eventually Azrael conquered and collected the handful of earth required. (This is supposed to account for the differing colours of the resultant races).¹

Another account, ignoring the idea of different coloured earth, says that God formed the body of Adam of " black putrid clay " which was forty years in drying. This handful of earth was then placed between Mekkah and Tayif, and the Lord rained " showers of mercy " on it for many years, until it was ready for creation.²

It was then that *Eblis*, the Devil, passed by, and contemptuously struck the clay figure on the abdomen ; hearing a hollow sound, he caustically remarked : " this individual is hollow, his architecture is neither substantial nor firm, he will soon be liable to get the colic." Nevertheless, in spite of his contempt,

¹ *Rausat-Us-Safa*, by Muhammad Ben Mahmud, trans. E. Behatzek from the Persian, p. 41. (*Oriental Trans. Fund, New Series*, 1891).

² *Rausat-Us-Safa*, p. 42.

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the Devil seems to have been jealous of such a creature and afraid that "man will become like one of us," for he there and then determined to destroy him.

Later, the Holy Spirit, or Soul, descended to ensoul the body of Adam, but as his nature seems to have been "thick and dark," it refused to enter.¹ Eventually, at God's command, it was persuaded to enter the body, and went in at the head, penetrating the whole body and changing it to flesh and skin.²

This, it is said, occurred on a Friday, the tenth day of Moharam, when the first degree of Capricorn was on the eastern horizon; Saturn was in Gemini, Jupiter in Pisces, Mars in Aries, the Moon in Leo, Sun in Mercury, and Venus in Libra. Here is a fine horoscope for an astrologer to study!

Eblis, the Devil, refusing to honour Adam with the other angels, was forbidden to enter Paradise, but planned to evade the prohibition and seduce Adam in such a way as to cause his exclusion from the Holy Place also. He first tried to induce the Peacock to take him, literally, under his wing, but the bird refused, advising him to try the Serpent; the Serpent was more easily persuaded, and

¹ Compare the refusal of the descending egos to enter the bodies prepared for them, in *The Secret Doctrine* account of creation.

² *Rausat-Us-Safa*, pp. 43-44.

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the Devil, entering the Serpent's throat, was introduced into Eden.

After the "fall," Adam took with him from the Garden a bag of wheat, thirty plants of corn, and also the famous Black Stone which is now set up in the Temple at Mecca.¹ Europeans who have seen the Stone declare it to be merely a meteorite ; this, however, does not seem to have disturbed the orthodox amongst the Mohammedans.

¹ *Rausat-Us-Safa*, p. 49.

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